

Professor Andrew Markus and
Dr Arunachalam Dharmalingam

mapping social cohesion

the scanlon foundation surveys



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foundation



Australian Multicultural Foundation



MONASH University

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Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements
Building 6
Clayton campus
Monash University
Victoria 3800

Mapping Social Cohesion

The 2007 Scanlon Foundation Surveys

Professor Andrew Markus and Dr Arunachalam Dharmalingam
Faculty of Arts, Monash University

with contributions by Liudmila Kirpitchenko (Monash University) and Darren Pennay
and Nikki Honey (The Social Research Centre)

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Monash University provided the research environment that sustained the project. The conclusions are those of the authors.

- Andrew Markus and Arunachalam Dharmalingam
Monash University

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Foreword

Mapping Social Cohesion is a report on the first round of a major longitudinal survey of social cohesion in Australia, funded by the Scanlon Foundation and directed by Professor Andrew Markus of Monash University.

The project has been undertaken as a partnership between the Scanlon Foundation, the Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements and the Australian Multicultural Foundation.

Other parts of the Scanlon Foundation Research Project have already been completed, namely a book entitled *Social Cohesion in Australia* (Cambridge University Press, 2007) and a forthcoming volume on international movements of people and social cohesion.

Australia is a highly successful nation of immigrants and the pace of intake of permanent settlers is set to increase in a high-employment economy, particularly in a mobile world in which many Australians are themselves leaving the country to work abroad. It is important, since the growth of immigrant numbers from a diverse range of countries is expected to continue, that potential and actual sources of tension be identified, both in the aggregate and at the local community level.

Consequently, the surveys reported by Professor Markus covered both the national and some selected local levels, since the individual community attitudes provide a special sense of how events are developing. It is especially through the micro perspective of local surveys that growing tensions, distractions or disaffection in communities can be observed, which is necessary for informing and fashioning applied policy.

The local surveys are complemented by the broader nationwide perspectives of the aggregate survey. However, in seeking to 'measure' social cohesion, it is clear that reference to its extent or height is not the equivalent of describing a tangible product such as the size, say, of a ship. Instead, the survey has adopted a wide-ranging approach enabling consideration of five key elements relating to attitudes, reported experience and behaviour.

On behalf of the Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements and the Australian Multicultural Foundation, we thank the Scanlon Foundation and its Chair, Mr Peter Scanlon, for the generous funding of the survey, and for the assistance provided to the project by Mr Bruce Smith.

We wish also to thank especially Professor Andrew Markus of Monash University for the great expertise, care and patience he has brought to the enormous amount of work entailed in developing the questionnaire, designing the local study surveys, creating the analytical framework and writing the report. He was ably supported by Dr Arunachalam Dharmalingam, also of Monash, who assisted with the questionnaire design and statistical analysis, and co-authored this report.

In addition, we wish to thank the several others mentioned in the acknowledgements, in particular Darren Pennay of The Social Research Centre, who played a part in bringing the survey to its satisfactory conclusion.

Understanding the meaning of social cohesion, and attempting as far as possible to map and measure it at the national and local levels, is of great importance for the future of both Australia's immigration program and its stability and prosperity. *Mapping Social Cohesion – The Scanlon Foundation Surveys* makes a signal contribution to this further understanding, and we have no doubt that the first and future parts of the Scanlon Social Cohesion Survey will receive wide attention. Their outcomes will also, we believe, give constructive indicators for policy intended to ensure the continued maintenance of social cohesion in Australia.

Professor John Nieuwenhuysen, AM
Director
Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements

Dr Bulent (Hass) Dellal, OAM
Executive Director
Australian Multicultural Foundation

Executive summary

Research objectives

The principal objectives of the project, established by the Scanlon Foundation, were to:

- establish a benchmark measure of social cohesion in Australia
- provide information that will contribute to improving social cohesion in Australia
- identify social or cultural barriers to increasing Australia's population through increased immigration.

The Scanlon Foundation Surveys (2007)

The surveys on which this report is based were administered to persons aged 18 years of age and over who were residents of private households in Australia.

The national survey comprised 2000 Australians stratified by geographic location.

The local area surveys included Australia-born and ethnic and cultural groups most frequently singled out as targets of animosity (Middle Eastern and Asian groups) as follows:

- three local area surveys, each of 300 random interviews (150 Australia-born and 150 overseas-born), in the Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Greater Dandenong (Victoria) and Fairfield (New South Wales) and the Statistical Local Areas (SLAs) of Stretton-Karawatha and Calamvale in Queensland
- two local area surveys, each of 300 interviews comprising a random component of 100 and a Middle Eastern background component of 200, in the LGAs of Hume (Victoria) and Auburn (New South Wales).

The design of the questionnaire was based on a review of international and Australian research and included questions used in previous studies to enable identification of change over time. Interviews were conducted by telephone (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) between June and August 2007.

The objective was to establish a national measure of social cohesion and to underpin this with a series of comparative surveys in areas of high immigrant concentration where, it is hypothesised, the potential for social tension is higher.

Defining social cohesion

On the basis of a review of international research, five domains of social cohesion were selected for analysis. A questionnaire was designed to explore the domains of:

- belonging
- social justice and equity
- participation (including engagement in voluntary work)
- acceptance (including attitudes to immigration issues and the experience of discrimination)
- sense of self-worth.

The logic of public opinion

A simplistic reading of survey results considers findings against the yardstick of a majority – whether 50% or more respondents endorse a specific proposition, and the extent of variation above or below the 50% mark. The approach adopted in this study is grounded on understanding the logic of public opinion, the types of questions that elicit near consensus (whether positive or negative) and those that divide opinion. Survey results are interpreted within three categories: (a) strong positive – above 70%; (b) polarised or divided – in the range 30–70%; (c) strong negative – below 30%.

(a) Strong positive

Questions of a general nature relating to national life and levels of personal satisfaction elicited the expected high levels of positive response.

In terms of **identifying with Australia**:

- the overwhelming majority of Australians (96%) express a strong sense of belonging
- 94% take great pride in the Australian way of life
- 94% believe maintaining the Australian way of life and culture is important.

In terms of **life satisfaction issues**:

- 89% indicate that ‘taking all things into consideration’, they are happy with their life, while 85% expect their lives to be the same or improved in three to four years time
- 75% express satisfaction with their present financial situation (22% are dissatisfied).

In terms of feeling included in relation to social justice and **equality of opportunity**, 80% agree that Australia ‘is a land of economic opportunity where in the long run, hard work brings a better life’.

When **immigration is considered in terms of broad principle**, there is a high level of positive sentiment. Thus in response to the proposition that ‘accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger’, 69% agreed (17% disagreed).

Future expectations

When asked to consider their prospects in the future, 85% expected that their lives would be the same or improved in three or four years. But when they were asked about their children's future, only 52% expected that their children's lives would be the same or improved – a substantial minority of 43% thought that their children's lives would be worse than their own.

When asked for their reasons, the most common references were to the cost of living and housing, extremes of wealth and poverty, the prospect of unemployment and poor working conditions, low moral standards and materialistic lifestyle, and environmental problems – pollution and climate change. There were very few references to the traditional fear of war.

(b) Divided opinion

Questions dealing with politicised issues necessarily elicit divided responses, in the 30–70% range, mirroring the division evident in support for the major political parties. This division of opinion is reflected when specific political issues are polled. Thus, in relation to [specific social justice issues](#):

- 52% agree that 'Australia has an excellent government school system' but 36% disagree
- opinion is evenly divided (46: 45%) on whether government financial support to those on low incomes is adequate.

With regard to [current immigration policy](#):

- 42% are of the view that the current intake is 'about right', a further 13% consider it to be too low; a substantial minority (35%) think the intake is too high.
- 48% consider the balance of immigration from different countries to be 'about right'.

In relation to [confidence in public institutions](#):

- only a minority (40%) have confidence that the federal government will 'almost always' or 'most times' do what is right for the Australian people.
- similarly, only 42% express confidence in their local council.

When [personal level of trust](#) is considered, opinion is again divided, although there is greater level of trust in people than in government; 55% of respondents agree that 'most people can be trusted', while 41% think 'you can't be too careful in dealing with people'.

(c) Strong negative

Questions related to policies that are seen to advantage minorities reveal the highest level of disagreement or opposition. This strongly negative response is inherent in the questions posed, for majority opinion rarely supports special benefits or advantages for minorities.

This is evident when [the social justice issue of income distribution](#) is raised – 77% agree with the proposition that ‘the gap between those with high incomes and those with low incomes is too large’; a small minority of 19% disagree.

Government funding that assists ethnic minorities to [maintain their customs and traditions](#) is seen as of benefit to select minorities, not as of national benefit, as indicated by the finding that 32% support such funding, but 62% oppose.

Benchmarking the national mood

The key to interpretation of survey findings is the contextualization of results – without context it is as if we were asked to find our way around an unfamiliar city without a map. Findings of earlier surveys provide a map for interpreting results, affording the means to locate trends.

[Consideration of the national survey in the context of earlier studies indicates that most of the 2007 findings are within the expected range. These is, however, increased support for some government programs and more positive attitudes are revealed by some life satisfaction indicators.](#)

Change is most evident in response to the type of questions that typically indicate divided opinion. Thus there has been an increase in the level of support for the immigration program, more evidence of trust in institutions and fellow Australians, and a marked increase in support for government funding to ethnic minorities for maintenance of customs and traditions. As to be expected, given the improved employment and economic environment, satisfaction with personal finances has increased.

Reported behaviour and experience

In addition to listening to what survey respondents tell us about attitudes, we need also to consider what is reported with regard to social involvement and interaction. To what extent do people involve themselves in political life, to what extent in communal activities through voluntary work? Research indicates that the extent to which individuals evidence trust and engage in co-operative activities, the level of 'social capital', is directly related to the harmonious operation of their communities. Of particular interest is the concept of 'bridging capital' as developed by the American political scientist Robert Putnam, which is concerned with the linkages and networks established between members of socially heterogeneous groups. Also of importance is the extent of negative interaction, the experience of discrimination, which may hinder contact between members of different social groups and may lead to alienation from the wider society.

Active participation in the community

A substantial proportion of the population is actively involved in community life and politics.

More than 30% of Australians undertake [voluntary work](#), most of them on a regular basis – over 60% of this number, or almost 20% of the total population, has involvement at least once per week.

Some 38% of respondents reported that they [visited](#) on a regular basis (at least several times a month) [people of a different nationality or ethnicity](#) in their homes.

With regard to [political participation](#), some 86.7% of respondents (or 93% who were citizens) had voted in an election over the previous three years; over the same interval 57.3% of the sample had signed a petition. A much smaller proportion was engaged in action calling for more active involvement. Over the past three years:

- 25% had written or spoken to a member of parliament
- 14.3% had participated in a boycott; a similar proportion had attended a protest
- 10.5% had attended a political meeting
- less than 5% had participated in a strike.

Experience of discrimination

Slightly more than one in four respondents (25.6%) report experience of discrimination over the course of their lives because of their national or ethnic background; a much lower proportion (7.7%) report discrimination on the basis of their religion. Almost one in 10 Australians (8.6%) report discrimination on grounds of national or ethnic background or religion *over the last 12 months*; 5.8% of respondents report experience of discrimination on an ongoing basis, at least once per month.

Variables of geography, gender, educational attainment, age and birthplace

Analysis of the distribution of opinion across a range of variables helps identify where and among whom social cohesion may be threatened. Statistical analysis at the national level considered differences in opinion with regard to the variables of region of residence, gender, level of education and qualification, age, birthplace of respondents and of their parents.

There is no uniform pattern of response across the full range of questions in the survey, but with regard to immigration and settlement issues the lowest level of support for government policy was found among:

- people with trade level qualifications
- people born in Australia to Australia-born parents
- people aged over 54 years.

Birthplace groups in the national survey

Analysis of the national sample was undertaken by three birthplace groups – those born in Australia, those born in English-speaking countries (ESB) and non-English-speaking countries (NESB). There was a large measure of convergence with regard to sense of belonging and worth and appraisal of social justice issues. The greatest *divergence* is evident in response to issues of participation and acceptance, including questions related to community involvement, experience of discrimination, and immigration and settlement policy.

Acceptance and rejection

About two out of 10 Australia-born report having experienced discrimination over the course of their lives as a consequence of their national or ethnic background; the proportion for the ESB is three out of 10 (31.7%) and NESB almost five out of 10 (46.5%). The NESB report discrimination over the last 12 months at double the level for the Australia-born.

Immigration and settlement

Attitudes to immigration issues also provide evidence of marked attitudinal divergence:

- In response to the question of whether immigration from diverse sources had made Australia stronger, 21.6% Australia-born, 23.3% ESB and 34.7% NESB were strongly in agreement.
- 10.5% Australia-born, 14.2% ESB and 20.2% NESB supported an increase in the immigration intake.
- In response to the question of government funding to ethnic minorities for maintenance of customs and traditions, 27.8% Australia-born, 27.5% ESB and 56.1% NESB agreed.

Participation and community involvement

The Australia-born indicated the highest level of involvement, followed by the ESB, with the NESB registering the lowest level on most indicators. Thus:

- 31% of the Australia-born, 22% of the ESB and 17% of the NESB were involved in volunteer work
- 64% of the Australia-born, 50.2% of the ESB and 31.6% of the NESB had signed a petition over the last three years; 27.2% of the Australia-born, 26.4% of the ESB and 13.5% of the NESB had contacted a member of parliament.

Immigrant cohorts

To provide understanding of change in attitude with length of residence in Australia, overseas-born respondents were divided into three categories (or cohorts): those arriving in 1967–81, 1982–96 and 1997–2007. The results demonstrate the strength in Australia of the forces working to integrate immigrants into national life and a shared value system. [The general pattern is one in which increased length of residence leads to closer identification with dominant Australian attitudes.](#)

While almost all respondents (90% +) indicate a sense of belonging to Australia to either a 'moderate extent' or 'great extent', those indicating a sense of belonging to a 'great extent' increased with time of residence:

- 38.7% for those who arrived 1997–2007
- 62.3% for 1982–96 arrivals
- 72.2% for 1967–81 arrivals.

Around 82% of the overseas-born agreed with the proposition that 'Australia is a land of economic opportunity where in the long run, hard work brings a better life', but the proportion who 'strongly agree' increased with length of residence from 26.9% to 36.2% to 40.6%.

Local surveys—regions of high immigrant concentration

[Social cohesion operates not in the abstract, the realm of the 'nation', but at the community level, where people of different backgrounds and cultures make their lives.](#) This understanding informed the decision to undertake surveys in areas of high immigrant concentration, where, it is hypothesised, the potential for social tension is higher. The data gathered by the national survey provided the means for interpreting developments at the community level through measurement of the extent of commonality and divergence across a range of indicators.

Four findings of particular significance were identified by the community-level surveys:

1. **Level of disaffection**, measured by response to a number of life satisfaction questions, is **at a low level**.
2. A **minority** of respondents (some 23.5%) born in Australia with both parents born in Australia evidence **negative attitudes towards aspects of immigration and settlement policy**
3. Comparison across birthplace groups reveals **marked attitudinal divergence in response to some questions**. The major divergences are in the levels of participation and acceptance, indicating lower levels of social capital in areas of high immigrant concentration. Thus:
 - 51.3% Australia-born with both parents born in Australia consider that the level of immigration intake is too high, compared with 22.1% of NESB respondents.
 - 20.5% of Australia-born with both parents born in Australia support government funding to ethnic minorities for maintenance of customs and traditions, compared with 70.1% of NESB respondents.
 - The national survey found that 33.8% of the Australia-born with both parents born in Australia were involved in voluntary work, compared with 29.1% of the same group at the local level. Within the NESB group at the national and local levels around half these proportions engaged in voluntary work; the proportion is lowest among the first generation of Middle East background, at 12.4%.
4. Respondents report **greater experience of discrimination, with the highest incidence reported by the overseas-born**.
 - Of Australia-born with both parents born in Australia, 20% report experience of discrimination over the course of their lives on the basis of nationality or ethnicity, compared with the highest response rate of 53.7% for those whose first language is Mandarin, Cantonese or Vietnamese.
 - Of respondents of Middle East background, 27.5% reported experience of discrimination on the basis of religion, compared with less than 10% for other groups.
 - Fewer than 5% of the Australia-born report discriminatory experience at least once per month, compared with 10% of NESB respondents.

Social cohesion

The broad indicators point to a society that is succeeding in establishing and maintaining a high level of positive outcomes within the domains of belonging, social justice and worth. There are, however, indicators of concern within the domains of participation and acceptance, with a significant level of misunderstanding between birthplace groups and experience of discriminatory and hostile behaviour.

The challenge for policy is to foster increased participation in community life within areas of high immigrant concentration and to further understanding of the immigrant experience, of the difficulties of resettlement in unfamiliar environments and alien cultures, of the personal impact of discriminatory acts, and of the contribution that immigrants have made and continue to make to Australian society.

The Scanlon Foundation Surveys (2007) provide findings to engage policy-makers and community leaders. However, when benchmarked against subsequent research, the key finding may prove to be that the level of disaffection and threat to social cohesion is at historically low levels in contemporary Australia.

Chapter One

Research Objectives:

The Scanlon Foundation Social Cohesion Research Program

1. Background

In pursuit of its mission to support the creation of a larger cohesive Australian society the Scanlon Foundation believes that the future prosperity of Australia, underpinned by population growth, will depend on the country's ability to maintain social cohesion in a society with even more cultural diversity than has been successfully accommodated historically.

Following advice from the Australian Institute for Demographic Research (ANU) the Foundation adopted, as a working hypothesis, 'a future population for Australia of 30 million people by 2050 ("30/50").'

The Foundation commissioned the Australian Academy for Technological Science and Engineering (ATSE) to advise whether there were any engineering, scientific or environmental barriers to reaching an Australian population of 30 million by 2050. In summary, ATSE concluded 'that there are no insurmountable engineering, scientific or environmental barriers to 30/50, assuming that thorough analysis and planning occur and that leadership is exercised by governments'.

The Foundation concurrently commissioned the Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements (MISGM) in partnership with the Australian Multicultural Foundation (AMF) to undertake a Social Cohesion Research Program (SCRP) 'to examine issues of social cohesion inherent in 30/50' and specifically 'how to (or whether we can) continue the successful immigration accomplishments of the past five decades'.

2. The Social Cohesion Research Program (SCRP)

The SCRCP has the objectives, *inter alia*, to:

- establish a benchmark measure of social cohesion in Australia
- provide information which will contribute to improving social cohesion in Australia
- identify social or cultural barriers to increasing Australia's population through increased immigration.

Building on a study undertaken within the SCRCP, which reviewed international research and developed an operational definition of the key components of social cohesion (see Chapter Three), a benchmark survey of Australian attitudes and behaviours was commissioned to measure the extent to which Australia does or does not conform to being a 'socially cohesive society'.

Chapter Two

Methodology, questionnaire design and administration

Australia lacks a rich tradition of sustained survey research. Professor Ian McAllister, Past Director of the Research School of Social Sciences at the Australian National University, recently commented:

More than at any time in the past, the design of effective public policy requires the assistance of accurate, informed social surveys. What aspects of social policy concern people most? How do people view the reform of the health services? What level of immigration do most people regard as appropriate for Australian society? These and a host of other questions can only be properly addressed if we know *what* people feel about these issues and *how* their views are formed and have changed over time ... Yet Australia, despite a long history of innovative policy-making, has lagged behind other advanced societies in developing these critical empirical tools. (in Wilson et al 2005: vii)

A number of substantial surveys either directly concerned with, or including reference to, immigration issues have been conducted in Australia over the last decade. The major studies, which inform the interpretation of the SCRP surveys here discussed, are:

Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia

Since 1993 the Department of Immigration, currently named the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, has undertaken the most comprehensive survey of immigrants in Australia's history. Three cohorts have been surveyed, those arriving in the years 1993–95, 1999–2000 and 2004–05, with sample sizes of 5192, 3124 and 9865 respectively. Following initial interviews, there were two follow-up studies, one each of the second and third cohort. The topics covered included reasons for immigration, transfer of assets to Australia, use of qualifications, labour force experience, adequacy of income, housing arrangements, government support, levels of satisfaction and perceptions of life in Australia. (Department of Immigration and Citizenship; Richardson 2004)

Living Diversity: Australia's Multicultural Future

The 2002 Living Diversity survey was commissioned by the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) Board to inform decision making relating to the development of the SBS's services, in line with its charter to serve its multilingual and multicultural constituency. The survey explored similarities and differences within and between non-English-speaking-background (NESB) respondents of different generations, with further attention to Indigenous Australians. It explored attitudes to cultural diversity and related issues, diversity in everyday life, sense of belonging, and media use in Australia.

The survey reached a sample of almost 3500, of similar proportions to the present project. It utilised a national sample of 1437, five NESB samples each of 400 respondents (Filipino, Greek, Lebanese, Somali and Vietnamese) and focus groups with 56 Aboriginal participants. The questionnaire comprised nine-sections and included 90 items. Various techniques were employed to reach respondents, ranging from random telephone dialling, name analysis of telephone directories, and field researchers associated with community organisations in the case of the Somali sample. The response rate varied across the groups from 21% to 80%. (Ang et al. 2002)

Australian Survey of Social Attitudes

The Australian Survey of Social Attitudes (AuSSA) is Australia's major social survey, begun in 2003 and re-administered in 2005 and 2007. It is managed by the Australian Demographic and Social Research Institute at the Australian National University and was developed with the co-operation of researchers around Australia. In 2005 AuSSA included a module of the World Values Survey, which is run in some 90 countries every five years.

The 2003 survey was distributed by mail to a random sample of 11,380 generated from the Australian Electoral Commission's Electoral Roll; 4270 valid responses were returned, a response rate of 44%. In the second survey, distributed in 2005, a slightly lower response rate of 43% yielded 3902 valid responses.

AuSSA encompasses a broad survey of attitudes and behaviour, administered in two versions with a common core of questions. The core component of the survey comprises some 130 questions, which were designed to be re-administered biennially to enable the tracking over time of Australian attitudes and activities. With additional modules, the 2003 survey comprised a total of 216 items in version A and 245 items in version B. Issues covered include views of Australia; citizenship and community life; law and authority; family, relationships and health; Australia and the world; work, education and living standards; and taxes and government services. Of particular relevance for issues of social cohesion are the questions relating to confidence in institutions, levels of trust, political involvement, attitudes to immigrants and immigration issues, and life satisfaction and future expectations. On the basis of the 2003 survey, Professor Murray Goot and Dr Ian Watson have undertaken an important analysis of findings relating to immigration, multiculturalism and national identity. (Australian Survey of Social Attitudes; Goot & Watson 2005).

The Racism Project

The Racism Project is a project by researchers at the University of New South Wales and Macquarie University. The project's current objectives are to:

- generate regional racism typologies across every jurisdiction for which data has been collected
- generate anti-racism packages (suggested anti-racism responses) for each regional typology
- field test anti-racism packages.

Several major surveys have been undertaken. The first, in 2001, was conducted by telephone among residents of New South Wales and Queensland. Subsequent surveys in 2006 and 2007 were conducted across all mainland states, with specific studies in Victoria, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory. The 2001 survey was completed by 5056 respondents, the 2006 surveys by 4020 and 4016 respondents, the 2007 surveys by 1484 and 454 respondents. Relatively short, single-focus survey instruments have been employed, the 2001 survey taking around five minutes to complete, with approximately 40 survey items, and the 2006 interstate survey of approximately 60 items taking five to 10 minutes to complete.

There have been two main foci for the research undertaken. One concerns the attempt to measure the incidence of racist attitudes and behaviours, tolerance of specific cultural groups and attitudes towards cultural diversity. The investigators have been particularly concerned to further understanding of the diversity of attitudes in different spatial contexts – to generate regional racism typologies for different parts of major cities and semi-rural and rural areas, and between urban and rural contexts. The 2006 mainland survey was concerned with types and frequency of racism experienced; it covered racist talk, exclusion, unfair treatment and attack, the location of racist behaviour, and the responses to and impact of racist behaviour. (Racism Project; Dunn 2003; Dunn and Forrest 2007)

Victorian Community Indicators Project

The McCaughey Centre: VicHealth Centre for the Promotion of Mental Health and Community Wellbeing was established at the University of Melbourne in June 2006. Its purpose is 'to create and share knowledge which strengthens the foundations of healthy, just and resilient communities leading to improved mental health and community wellbeing'. The centre operates in a knowledge environment that understands social inclusion and economic security, and freedom from violence and discrimination, as being directly linked to positive mental health and wellbeing outcomes. Among its activities the centre hosts Community Indicators Victoria (CIV). CIV aims to establish a sustainable statewide system of local community wellbeing indicators 'to improve citizen engagement, community planning and policy making'. (McCaughy Centre)

To supplement the data sources of the Australian Bureau of Statistics, state and local governments and existing surveys, a community indicators survey was administered in 2007 in Victoria by telephone and reached a target of 24,000 adults, with a minimum of 300 respondents in each local government area (LGA). Questions of particular interest for the understanding of levels of social cohesion included self-reported health, subjective wellbeing, social support, economic security, sense of belonging to the community and perceptions of safety. A comprehensive set of indicators for each LGA has been made available through the community indicators website, with a new dataset released on 26 November 2007.

There are additional on-going surveys of relevance for social cohesion in Australia. The Westpac–Melbourne Institute (University of Melbourne) Survey of Consumer Sentiment is a monthly survey of 1200 respondents across Australia stratified by gender, age and location; its index includes respondents' assessment of current household financial situation. The Australian Unity Wellbeing Index, a joint project of Australian Unity and Deakin University's Australian Centre on Quality of Life, is a comprehensive measure of personal and national wellbeing. Begun in 2001, some 20 surveys have been completed, each with a national sample of 2000. There is comprehensive analysis of data with regard to key variables of gender, age, relationship, employment, health and locality; a range of additional variables have been considered, including pet ownership, sport, leisure, even a person's height, but there has been almost no attention to the various dimensions of ethnicity, including experience of discrimination. (see, for example, Australian Unity Wellbeing Index 2006; 2008; compare *The Personal Wellbeing of Australians Living within Federal Electoral Divisions 2005*: 22)

International best practice

While there have thus been significant survey-based research projects undertaken over the last 10 years, the extent of research in Australia lags behind international best practice, indicated by British research activity.

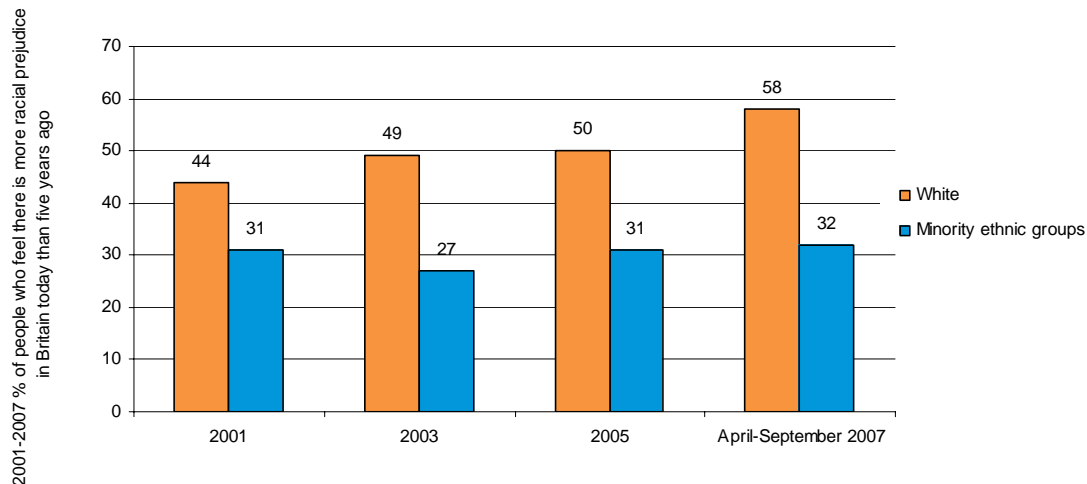
Responding to the incidence of social discord, manifested in major urban disturbances and group and individual homicidal attacks, British governments have actively sought to grapple with issues of racism, alienation and political extremism since the 1960s. One component of this response has been systematic survey research to inform policy.

Detailed and wide-ranging citizenship surveys were conducted in 2001, 2003, 2005 and since 2007 on an ongoing basis. This survey-based research is currently under the direction of the Department of Communities and Local Government, which has responsibility for 'creating safe, tolerant and inclusive communities'.

The first three citizenship surveys were each administered to some 15,000 respondents in face-to-face interviews, taking approximately 60 minutes to complete. The surveys reached a representative core sample of almost 10,000 aged 16 and above, with a minority ethnic boost of 5000 and scope for additional boosts in key areas.

Topics covered in the citizenship surveys include sense of belonging to Britain and locality; levels of trust in neighbours; interaction with people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds; perception of racial prejudice and discrimination; people's involvement in the neighbourhood; social and family networks. Replication of survey questions since 2001 provides the basis for precise monitoring and analysis of trends, as indicated by the measurement of perceptions of racial prejudice (see Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1: English and Welsh perceptions of racial prejudice, by ethnicity, 2001–2007



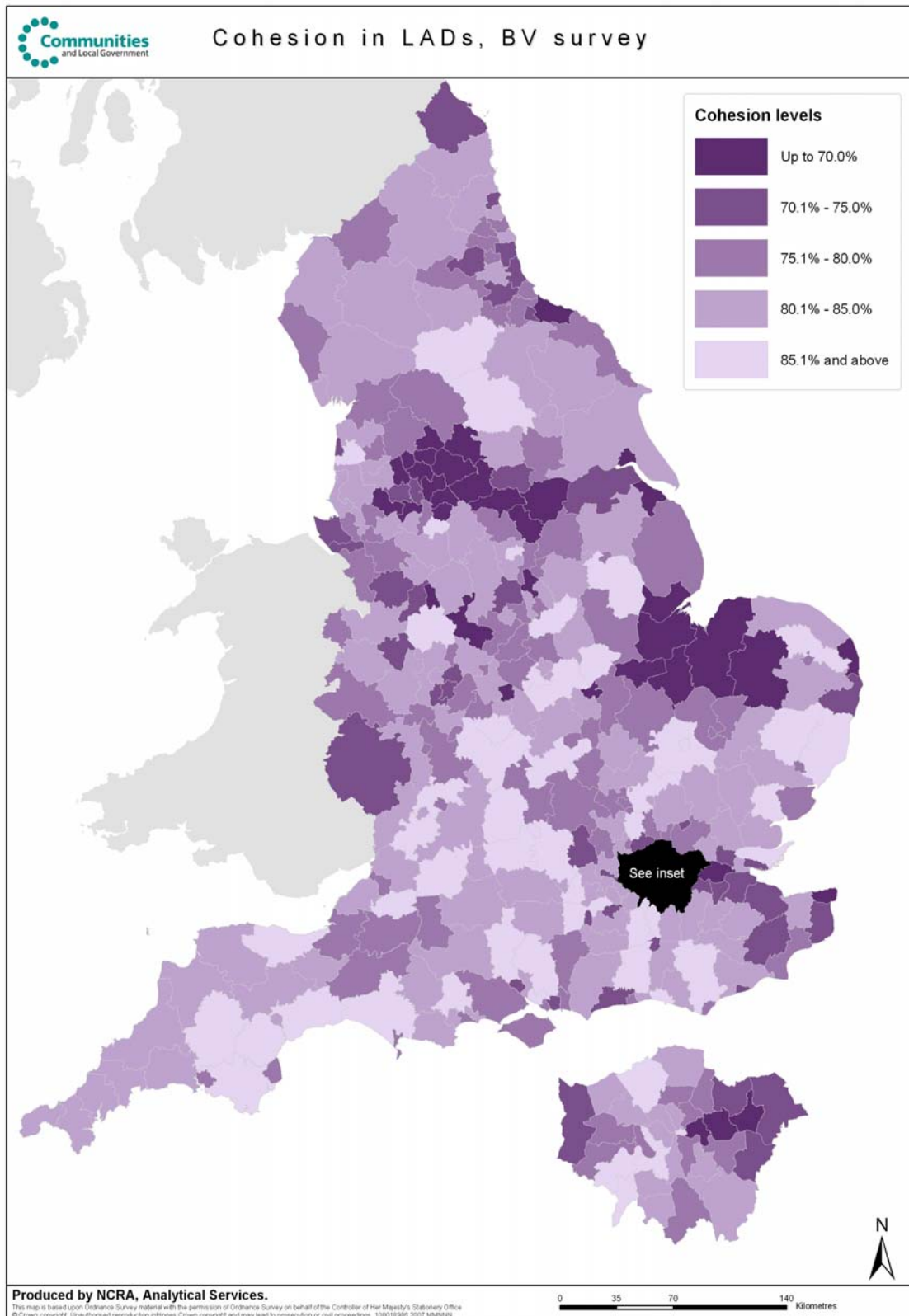
Source: Department of Communities and Local Government (2008), *Citizenship Survey: 2001 to April–September 2007, England and Wales*: 17.

A key question concerning sense of community provides the basis for an index of social cohesion across England and Wales. This question asks respondents “To what extent do you agree or disagree that this local area (within 15–20 minutes walking distance) is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together?”

All local authorities since 2006 have included this question in their statutory survey of resident and customer satisfaction. The statutory survey is administered through postal questionnaire and is completed by at least 1100 respondents in every local authority. The findings indicate that 79% agree that people of different backgrounds get on well in their local area, a similar finding to the citizenship surveys; level of agreement in local authorities ranged from 38% to 90%, with agreement below 60% in only ten of 387 areas. These findings from local authorities make possible country-wide monitoring of levels of social cohesion. (Map 2.1; see also Commission on Integration and Cohesion 2007)

Indicative of the quality of community-based research and its significance for informed policy is the 2007 study conducted for the Department of Communities and Local Government, *What Works in Community Cohesion*, which presents key strategies for dealing with threats to cohesion and examples of initiatives and projects undertaken in six communities.

Map 2.1: Cohesion in English Local Authority Districts, 2006



A simplistic reading of survey results considers findings against the yardstick of a simple majority – whether 50% or more respondents endorse a specific proposition or evince a positive attitude, and the extent of variation from the simple majority or minority. The approach adopted in this study is grounded on understanding of the logic of public opinion, the types of questions that elicit near consensus (whether positive or negative) and those that divide opinion. Three categories may be used to demarcate the range of attitudinal responses:

Category 1 – High positive response

A high level of positive response is elicited by questions relating to what is termed the Australian way of life, economic opportunity and levels of personal satisfaction. Questions concerned with legal compliance, for example taxation laws and eligibility for government benefits, also elicit strong levels of positive agreement.

Category 2 – Divided opinion

Questions that deal with politicised issues necessarily elicit divided responses, mirroring the division evident in support for political parties. This division of opinion is reflected when specific political issues are raised, for example government support for the public school system and immigration policy. Questions dealing with levels of trust, for example in politicians and fellow citizens, also produce divided results.

Category 3 – High negative response

Questions related to policies that are seen to advantage minorities reveal the highest level of negative response – particularly evident when national opinion is surveyed. This strongly negative response is inherent in the questions posed, for majority opinion rarely favours the provision of special benefits to those seen as ‘other’; thus government funding directed to ethnic groups receives low levels of support and there is negative assessment of policies that entrench cultural difference. When minorities are polled the perception of advantage necessarily shifts, yielding differing results, although on some issues members of minorities tend to approximate to the national norm.

This survey takes its departure from aspects of earlier Australian research with respect to six key interlinked design elements:

- As distinct from surveys that operate exclusively at the national level, or aim to provide general data for localities across a state, the survey seeks to provide both a national benchmark and carefully targeted case studies, an approach developed through earlier surveys in the Springvale region of Melbourne. (Markus 1993a, 1993b, 1999; see also Forrest and Dunn 2007)
- As distinct from surveys that explore a narrow range of linked issues, and run the risk of biasing results by placing a clear and limited agenda before respondents, the survey explores attitudes and experiences within five domains, with careful attention to the sequencing of questions.

- The survey places its findings in the context of earlier research, where earlier research is reported with sufficient precision to enable benchmarking to be undertaken, to establish trend in opinion and reported experience
- The survey is concerned less with responses to specific questions, more with pattern of response to different types of questions.
- The survey explores issues of magnitude or scale, interpreting responses not at an abstract level, but in the context of life experience – the realm of personal finances, happiness and future expectations.
- The survey utilises the variable of birthplace to provide the interpretative key to understanding of attitudes and experiences at the community level; areas chosen for case studies and the setting of respondent quotas are determined by this emphasis.

With regard to birthplace, the implementation of the survey was designed to provide informed understanding of attitudes at the community level of Australians of the second generation, and ethnic and cultural groups most frequently singled out as targets of animosity. In the recent Australian context this entailed consideration of Middle Eastern and Asian groups, as indicated by qualitative and quantitative research findings.

In their 2001 project Dunn and Forrest reported that in response to the question 'Which cultural or ethnic groups do you believe do not fit into Australian society?' 27.3% of respondents in Sydney referred to immigrants from the Middle East and 22.5% to Muslims; the next most frequent specific references were to South-East Asians at 6.6% and to the generic category of foreigners or ethnics at 6.5% (Racism Project). When the 2001 responses from Queensland and New South Wales were aggregated in response to a question about level of concern about intermarriage to people from selected cultural and religious backgrounds, 51.9% nominated Muslims; the next most frequent references were to Indigenous Australians at 28.2% and those of Jewish faith at 24%. These rankings were replicated in the 2006 Victorian study conducted by the same researchers. (VicHealth 2007: 41)

This operational hypothesis was validated by findings of the present study. In the national benchmark survey, when respondents were asked if there should be more immigrants from any country, Western Europe and the United Kingdom were most frequently specified. When asked if there were countries from which there should be less immigrants, the generic terms 'Middle East' and 'Muslim countries', in addition to six specific Muslim countries, were nominated by 19% of respondents; the next most frequent reference (15.4%) was to the generic term 'Asia' and nine specific Asian countries.

The 2007 Surveys

The following presents a summary of the detailed 'Social Cohesion Study Methodological Report' prepared by The Social Research Centre and available to researchers on request. The theoretical basis of the questionnaire is discussed in Chapter Three of this report.

Questionnaire design

The questionnaire utilised questions from previous Australian and overseas studies to facilitate identification of change over time. The questionnaire was developed and pre-tested as part of the larger Social Cohesion Research Program under the direction of Professor John Nieuwenhuysen, Director of the Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements, and Dr Hass Dellal, from the Australian Multicultural Foundation. Expert advice was provided by Bruce Smith of the Scanlon Foundation and The Social Research Centre.

Pre-testing was via expert review, focus groups and cognitive testing interviews, undertaken for the project by the Ecumenical Migration Centre. Forty-eight people of NESB participated in six focus-group sessions over two weeks during February 2007. The groups varied in size from four to 10 participants and consisted of single-gender and mixed-gender groups. The groups comprised participants from different ethnicities and at least two focus groups included people from diverse religions. Detailed written comments were provided on each question in the draft questionnaire. In particular, attention was drawn to terms and phrases that had the potential to be judged confusing, contentious or too abstract.

The questionnaire was re-drafted in light of comments received. It was then pilot tested by Social Research Centre interviewers. A total of 85 pilot test interviews were conducted. A multi-stage approach was adopted, comprising an initial pilot test of 10 interviews on 3 May, followed by revisions to the questionnaire and re-testing of 23 interviews on 15 May. Further revisions were agreed and the remaining pilot test interviews (52) were carried out between 5 and 7 June.

Sequencing, order, wording amendments and question deletions to the draft questionnaire were agreed throughout the pilot testing process.

Survey overview

The in-scope population for the Scanlon Foundation Surveys (2007) was persons aged 18 years of age and over who were residents of private households in Australia. Data collection was by Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI). Three distinct surveys were undertaken:

- a national benchmark survey of 2000 Australian adults stratified by geographic location
- three local level surveys in the LGAs of Greater Dandenong (Victoria) and Fairfield (New South Wales), and the Statistical Local Areas Stretton-Karawatha and Calamvale in Queensland (300 random surveys in each area)
- two local level surveys in the LGAs of Hume (Victoria) and Auburn (New South Wales) – 300 surveys in each LGA comprising of a random component (100 surveys in each area) and a Middle Eastern/Turkish component (200 surveys in each area).

The sampling technique for the national benchmark survey and the random components of the local level surveys was Random Digit Dialling (RDD). Approach letters introducing the survey were mailed to households where randomly generated telephone numbers could be matched to an address in the Electronic White Pages (EWP).

For the Middle Eastern/Turkish component, a surname-based sampling approach was used. This involved the generation of a selection of known Middle Eastern and Turkish surnames from the EWP. Only first-generation (born in the target countries) or second-generation (one or both parents born in the target countries) immigrants were eligible for interview.

Respondents were selected using the 'next birthday' method and a range of strategies were adopted to maximise response, including repeated call-backs to establish contact, the operation of a 1800 number by The Social Research Centre, and interviewing in languages other than English. Table 2.1 provides a summary of project statistics.

Table 2.1: Survey overview

Component	National benchmark survey	Local level surveys – random component	Local level surveys – Middle Eastern/Turkish component
Interviews completed	2012	1141	368
Response rate	44%	42%	37%
Start date	21 June 2007	28 June 2007	3 July 2007
Finish date	1 August	18 August	18 August
Average interview length	15.3 minutes	16.5 minutes	17.1 minutes

Sample design

National benchmark survey

The national benchmark survey used a random sampling methodology, stratified by geographic location. The sample was stratified by state/territory, with a minimum quota of 200 interviews per state/territory to be achieved (i.e. a sub-total of 1600 interviews). The remaining 400 interviews were allocated across the five most populous states (New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia and South Australia) on a probability proportional to size basis. The interviews in each state were allocated to Capital City/Rest of State in proportion to the population. This approach ensured that the final sample composition was geographically representative of the Australian adult population while, at the same time, ensuring a sufficiently large sample in each state/territory to support analysis at that level.

Local level surveys

The local level surveys also used a stratified sample design, with 300 interviews per area. Each area selected had a relatively high incidence of overseas-born residents. The areas were selected from the findings of Stage One of the Social Cohesion Project, which involved a detailed demographic mapping of settler patterns in Australia, designed to identify areas of high NESB people.

Within Greater Dandenong, Fairfield and Stretton-Karawatha/ Calamvale a sub-quota of 150 Australia-born and 150 overseas-born interviews was set. The quota control system used for the survey was based on the premise that the quota for Australia-born persons would fill before that for overseas-born persons. This turned out not to be the case, meaning that the requirement to achieve 50% of interviews in these areas from overseas-born persons was achieved without the need for quota controls.

Within Hume and Auburn, 100 interviews were random within each LGA and the remaining 200 surveys in each LGA were to be conducted with people of Middle Eastern or Turkish background. Table 2.2 shows the *a priori* stratification used for the local level surveys.

Table 2.2: Overview of geographic stratification for the local level surveys

Geographic strata	Minimum completed Interviews	Sub-quota 1	Sub-quota 2
		<i>Australia born interviews</i>	<i>Overseas-born Interviews</i>
Greater Dandenong	300	150	150
Fairfield	300	150	150
Stretton-Karawatha / Calamvale	300	150	150
		<i>Random interviews</i>	<i>Middle Eastern/ Turkish interviews</i>
Hume	300	100	200
Auburn	300	100	200

Procedures for interviewing in languages other than English

Non-English-language interviewing was limited to the six most commonly spoken community languages (Vietnamese, Chinese (Cantonese and Mandarin), Italian, Greek, Arabic and Turkish).

Where the preferred language of interview of the selected sample member was identified as one of those for follow-up, initially these records were stockpiled until a reasonable workload for a bi-lingual interviewer was reached.

Where the preferred language could not be immediately identified, a call-back was made in the hope that another household member would then be available to assist with the request for interview. Where the preferred language was not one of the six target languages, the record was assigned the code 'language difficulty, no follow-up' and no further call attempts were made.

Bi-lingual interviewers attended a supplementary briefing where issues of cultural sensitivity and language 'pitch' were discussed. Annotated questionnaires (one for each target language) were prepared, with key words and concepts translated. Bi-lingual interviewers then read the questions from their hard-copy translated/annotated version of the questionnaire and recorded answers directly into the English language CATI script as normal. Table 2.3 shows the language of interview used in the surveys.

Table 2.3: Language of interview

Language	National benchmark study	Local level surveys (random component)	Local level surveys (Middle Eastern/ Turkish component)
English	1977	999	224
Cantonese	4	35	0
Mandarin	6	51	0
Vietnamese	9	39	0
Italian	4	1	0
Greek	9	2	0
Arabic (incl. Lebanese)	3	14	79
Turkish	0	0	65
Total	2012	1141	368
<i>% of interviews in language other than English</i>	1.7%	9.7%	40.2%

Fieldwork quality control procedures

The questionnaire and survey methodology was approved by the Monash University ethics committee with oversight of research involving human participants (Project number 2007/0319). Ethical considerations for the social cohesion survey included:

- ensuring informed consent
- ensuring the voluntary nature of participation was clearly understood
- protecting the privacy and confidentiality of respondent information.

In addition to formal agreements, The Social Research Centre is bound to adhere to ASMRO Privacy Principles and the AMSRS Code of Professional Behaviour.

All interviewers selected to work on the social cohesion survey attended a comprehensive two-hour briefing session that covered:

- project background, objectives and procedures
- all aspects of administering the survey questionnaire, including ethical and specific data quality issues
- overview of respondent liaison issues, including refusal avoidance techniques
- practice interviewing.

The briefing sessions were delivered by The Social Research Centre project manager and supervisory staff. A total of 63 interviewers were briefed.

Consistent with the 'specialist team' policy for the social cohesion survey, more than half of the interviewing (51%) was completed by 14 members of the interviewing team.

The in-field quality monitoring techniques applied to this project included:

- validation of a total 272 national benchmark interviews (or a minimum of 10% of each interviewer's work)
- validation of a total 195 local level surveys (or a minimum of 10% of each interviewer's work)
- field team debriefing after the first shift and thereafter whenever there was important information to impart to the field team in relation to data quality, consistency of interview administration, techniques to avoid refusals, appointment-making conventions or project performance
- examination of verbatim responses to 'other specify' questions
- monitoring (listening in) by The Social Research Centre project manager and supervisory staff.

Response analysis

For the purpose of this report, response rate is defined as interviews as a proportion of in-scope sample members contacted within the call cycle. The final overall response rate for the national benchmark survey was 44%. This is on target with expectations for a survey of this nature (The Social Research Centre predicted a 45% response rate in our research proposal) and comparable with response rates achieved for other similar surveys undertaken by the centre.

The response rate for the local level surveys was 42% random component and 37% Middle Eastern/Turkish component. The response rate obtained for the Middle Eastern component is similar to that of other surveys conducted by The Social Research Centre among the same population groups (most notably the 'International Crime Victimization Survey', where the response rate among Middle Eastern respondents was 36.3%). There was some variation in response rates by sub-group and geographic location, as detailed in the methodological report.

Achieved sample profile

Table 2.4 compares the achieved sample profile (using unweighted data) with that of the general population (based on 2006 Census data).

The achieved age and gender profile (which is accounted for in the weighting) is skewed towards females and older persons. This is typical of survey research of this nature involving a random method of respondent selection and no controls over age and gender distribution, and is probably attributable, to some degree, to the self-selection that occurs when using the 'next birthday' method of respondent selection.

The other noteworthy aspect of the achieved sample profile is the skew towards tertiary-educated respondents. Such persons are typically over-represented in survey research and it is hypothesised that surveys of this nature have greater 'appeal' for persons of such a profile, who could be expected to have more 'liberal' attitudes and be more positively inclined towards participation in social research.

Table 2.5 summarises the achieved sample profile for each area in the random component of the local level surveys. The achieved gender distribution shows a broadly similar skew towards females to that in the national benchmark survey. The age distribution is likewise skewed towards older persons. The skew towards university-educated and employed persons is more pronounced than in the national benchmark survey.

Table 2.6 summarises achieved sample profile by place of birth in the national benchmark survey.

Table 2.7 summarises the achieved birthplace results and Table 2.8 first language of respondents in the local level surveys.

Table 2.8 summarises the first language of respondents in the local level surveys.

Table 2.4: Sample profile – national benchmark survey

	Achieved sample profile (Unweighted)	Australian population
Total (n) Age group	2012	
18–24 years	6.8%	12.4%
25–34 years	16.5%	17.7%
35–44 years	21.9%	19.5%
45–54 years	20.8%	18.3%
55–64 years	17.0%	14.5%
65 years or more	16.8%	17.5%
Gender		
Male	42.4%	48.7%
Female	57.6%	51.3%
Employment status		
Employed	60.9%	62.2%
Educational attainment		
Year 10 or below	27.1%	33.5%
Year 12 or equivalent	19.0%	20.3%
Trade or technical	24.6%	24.4%
University (Bachelor or postgraduate degree)	27.5%	20.6%
Australia/overseas-born		
Australia-born	72.8%	70.9%
Overseas-born	26.7%	22.2%

Age, gender and birthplace figures taken from ABS 2006 Census data. Employment status taken from ABS July 2007 *Labour Force* publication and educational attainment taken from ABS, May 2006, *Education and Work*. Please note that the latter two publications include Australians aged 15 years or more.

Table 2.5: Sample profile – local level surveys (random component)

	Achieved profile in Greater Dandenong (Unweighted)	Greater Dandenong population	Achieved profile in Fairfield (Unweighted)	Fairfield population	Achieved profile in Stretton-Karawtha/Calamvale (Unweighted)	Stretton-Karawtha/Calamvale population	Achieved profile in Hume (Unweighted)	Hume population	Achieved profile in Auburn (Unweighted)	Auburn population
Total (n)	301		300		303		103		134	
Age group										
18–24 years	11.0%	13.2%	13.0%	14.3%	12.5%	15.1%	11.7%	14.4%	14.2%	16.7%
25–34 years	19.6%	18.8%	16.0%	18.0%	13.5%	21.7%	12.6%	19.6%	25.4%	23.7%
35–44 years	17.9%	18.1%	25.3%	19.8%	24.1%	21.1%	22.3%	23.2%	20.9%	20.3%
45–54 years	20.9%	17.5%	25.3%	19.6%	25.4%	20.6%	20.4%	18.6%	11.9%	16.7%
55–64 years	15.6%	14.4%	11.7%	13.3%	12.5%	13.4%	15.5%	12.8%	13.4%	10.6%
65 years or more	14.6%	17.9%	8.0%	15.1%	10.9%	8.0%	17.5%	11.5%	13.4%	12.0%
Gender										
Male	47.5%	49.4%	40.0%	48.7%	37.6%	48.9%	35.0%	48.9%	42.5%	52.1%
Female	52.5%	13.2%	60.0%	51.3%	62.4%	51.1%	65.0%	51.1%	57.5%	47.9%
Employment status										
Employed	60.5%	47.9%	55.7%	46.2%	61.1%	63.6%	60.2%	55.8%	61.9%	43.7%
Educational attainment										
University (bachelor or postgraduate degree)	23.9%	6.4%	16.3%	5.9%	35.3%	15.5%	19.4%	5.9%	36.6%	10.4%
Australia/overseas-born										
Australia-born	43.7%	44.0%	43.5%	44.7%	48.5%	55.4%	66.7%	68.6%	34.8%	40.8%
Overseas-born	56.3%	56.0%	56.5%	55.3%	51.5%	44.6%	33.3%	31.4%	65.2%	59.2%

Age, gender and birthplace figures taken from ABS 2006 Census data. Employment status and educational attainment taken from ABS Basic Community Profiles, Census 2001. (Please note that the population figures reported are based on Australians aged 15 years or more.)

Table 2.6: Sample profile – birthplace groups in the national benchmarking survey (birthplace groups >0.4%)

	Achieved sample profile (unweighted)	Australian population
Total (n) Country of birth	2012	
Australia	72.8%	70.9%
China (excl. Taiwan)	0.9%	1.0%
Germany	1.3%	0.5%
Greece	1.0%	0.6%
Hong Kong	0.4%	0.4%
India	0.9%	0.7%
Italy	0.7%	1.0%
Malaysia	0.4%	0.5%
Netherlands	0.5%	0.4%
New Zealand	2.7%	2.0%
South Africa	0.8%	0.5%
United Kingdom	10.0%	5.2%
United States	0.5%	0.3%
Vietnam	0.5%	0.8%
Other Asia	1.8%	
Other South America	0.4%	
Other North America	0.2%	
Other Middle East	0.6%	
Other West Europe	0.9%	
Other East Europe	1.2%	
Other Africa	0.5%	
Other Pacific	0.2%	
(Don't know/refused))	0.5%	
Total	100%	

Source: Birthplace figures from ABS 2006 Census QuickStats.

**Table 2.7: Birthplace distribution: local level survey
(birthplace groups > nine respondents)**

Country of birth	Achieved profile: local level surveys, random component		Achieved profile: local level surveys, Middle Eastern/ Turkish component	
Australia	540	47.3%	80	21.7%
China (excl. Taiwan)	54	4.7%		
Egypt			15	4.1%
Hong Kong	12	1.1%		
India	39	3.4%		
Italy	15	1.3%		
Lebanon	17	1.5%	86	23.4%
Malta	19	0.9%		
New Zealand	26	2.3%		
Philippines	19	1.7%		
Sri Lanka	30	2.7%		
Turkey			101	27.4%
United Kingdom	46	4.0%		
Vietnam	81	7.1%		
Other Asia	65	5.7%		
Other South America	17	1.5%		
Other North America				
Other Middle East	38	3.4%	66	17.9%
Other West Europe				
Other East Europe	16	1.4%		
Other Africa	13	1.1%		
Other Pacific				
(Don't know/refused)	16	1.4		
Total	1141	100%	368	100%

**Table 2.8: First language of respondents: local level survey
(first language > nine respondents)**

First language	Achieved profile: local level surveys, random component		Achieved profile: local level surveys, Middle Eastern/Turkish component, first generation	
English	688	60.3%	38	12.8%
Cantonese	45	3.9%		
Mandarin	65	5.7%		
Vietnamese	65	5.7%		
Italian	14	1.3%		
Spanish	13	1.1%		
Arabic (incl. Lebanese)	34	2.9%	113	37.9%
Turkish			113	37.9%
Other (incl. refused and don't know)	186	16.3%	34	11.3%
Total	1141	100%	298	100%

Weighting

Data for the national benchmarking survey was weighted by age and sex within state using 2006 Census data.

The local level surveys (random component) were weighted by age and sex within each area, using 2006 Census data. A pre-weight was applied to the data set that aligned the proportion of overseas- and Australia-born respondents to 2006 Census figures. Another weight was produced to be used when combining Greater Dandenong, Fairfield and Stretton-Karawatha/Calamvale, which took into account the population of these areas. A third weight was calculated to be used for data from all five areas in the random component. This weight was corrected for age and sex across all five areas using 2006 Census data.

The weight for the Middle Eastern sample simply aligned the proportion of Middle Eastern respondents and Turkish respondents to the 2006 Census data. This weight was applied to anyone surveyed in Hume or Auburn of Middle Eastern or Turkish background as identified via either the random sample or the targeted approach. Details of population weighting matrices used are included in the methodological report.

Chapter Three

The concept of social cohesion

Social cohesion as a concept has a long tradition in academic enquiry and occupies a central place in discussion of the role of *consensus* and *conflict* in society. From the mid-1990s, interest proliferated in conceptual frameworks of social order, social cohesiveness and solidarity. Initial concerns were prompted by fear of the impact of globalisation and other aspects of economic change; subsequently the war on terror and concern over the loyalty of Muslim populations has fuelled discussion of the dynamics of social cohesion. (Discussion based on Markus & Kirpitchenko 2007a)

Definitions of social cohesion

The study of social cohesion has been of fundamental importance within sociology, engaging the research and theoretical interest of the discipline's founders, including Emile Durkheim, Max Weber and Talcott Parsons. Over the last decade there has been a proliferation of studies leading to major conceptual advances. In 1996 Judith Maxwell developed an influential policy-directed definition with its central focus on communal engagement:

Social cohesion involves building shared values and communities of interpretation, reducing disparities in wealth and income, and generally enabling people to have a sense that they are engaged in a common enterprise, facing shared challenges, and that they are members of the same community. (Maxwell 1996: 13)

Maxwell's all-encompassing definition is still often cited today. It identified the crucial areas for social policy intervention, such as the need for creating shared values and common goals and combating inequality. Almost simultaneously with Maxwell, the Commissariat Général du Plan (1997) of the French government proposed its definition, which emphasised social processes involved in building and maintaining shared values: 'Social cohesion is a set of social processes that help instil in individuals the sense of belonging to the same community and the feeling that they are recognised as members of that community.'

The government of Canada set up an Interdepartmental Policy Research Sub-committee on Social Cohesion, which included more than 20 departments and agencies. In March 1997 it produced the *Social Cohesion Research Workplan* with its own working definition of social cohesion stressing multiple shared values and beliefs needed to achieve cohesion in a society: 'Social cohesion is an ongoing process of developing a community of shared values, shared challenges and equal opportunity within Canada, based on a sense of trust, hope and reciprocity among all Canadians.'

In its interim report, 18 months later, the Policy Research Sub-committee identified societal faultlines – or cleavages – that were perceived to be opening in Canadian society. They related to: (1) the aging population, (2) changing ethnic and cultural composition of Canada and (3) evolving family structures. This list of faultlines is indicative of the scope of issues perceived to be of concern to the social cohesion agenda in Canada. Explicitly, social cohesion issues were conceived in the broadest possible terms, which included not only exclusively addressing differences based on ethnic or cultural background, but also those based on economic status, gender inequality, age group, rural dwelling and family structure.

A leading Canadian scholar, Jane Jenson, who is a past director of CPRN Family network, published a comprehensive review of Canadian research in *Mapping Social Cohesion* (1998) and offered a definition paralleling the *Workplan* in its stress on process rather than end result: ‘The term “social cohesion” is used to describe a process more than a condition or a state, while it is seen as involving a sense of commitment, and desire or capacity to live together in some harmony.’

Jane Jenson (1998: 15) developed an approach to social cohesion through five constituent dimensions; in 1999, Paul Bernard added the sixth:

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Belonging | Isolation |
| 2. Inclusion | Exclusion |
| 3. Participation | Non-involvement |
| 4. Recognition | Rejection |
| 5. Legitimacy | Illegitimacy |
| 6. Equality | Inequality |

Paul Bernard’s (1999) typology distinguished the *formal and substantial* aspects of social cohesion in three spheres of human activity: economic, political and socio-cultural:

Character of the relation/ spheres of activity	Formal	Substantial
Economic	Inclusion/Exclusion	Equality/Inequality
Political	Legitimacy/Illegitimacy	Participation/Passivity .
Socio-cultural	Recognition/Rejection	Belonging/Isolation

Forrest and Kearns (2001: 2129) contributed a further, comprehensive representation of the domains of social cohesion:

Common values and a civic culture	Common aims and objectives; common moral principles and codes of behaviour; support for political institutions and participation in politics
Social order and social control	Absence of general conflict and threats to the existing order; absence of incivility; effective informal social control; tolerance; respect for difference; intergroup co-operation
Social solidarity and reductions in wealth disparities	Harmonious economic and social development and common standards; redistribution of public finances and of opportunities; equal access to services and welfare benefits; ready acknowledgement of social obligations and willingness to assist others
Social networks and social capital	High degree of social interaction within communities and families; civic engagement and associational activity; easy resolution of collective action problems
Place attachment and identity	Strong attachment to place; intertwining of personal and place identity

Other researchers have tried to develop definitions that explore the complexity of the value systems that underlie social cohesion. Thus, the Council of Europe (1999, cited in Beauvais & Jenson 2002: 4) suggests the following:

Social cohesion comprises a sense of belonging: to a family, a social group, a neighbourhood, a workplace, a country or, why not, to Europe (though care must be taken to avoid erecting a Schengen wall to replace the Berlin Wall). Yet this sense of belonging must not be exclusive; instead, *multiple identity and belonging must be encouraged.* (emphasis added)

It has been argued recently in Canada that social cohesion has come to be used as an all-encompassing framework for discussing social harmony and is, therefore, too broad. New frameworks that currently define policy discussions in Canadian government documents include such concepts as shared citizenship, cultural diversity, sustainable social development and citizenship values. Yet these new frameworks offer even broader approaches to social problems and tend to underestimate issues relating to inter-ethnic relations and effective integration of immigrants into the receiving societies.

Recent United Kingdom policy debates have attempted to narrow the definition of social cohesion in the context of issues of ethnic and cultural diversity. For this purpose, in the UK social cohesion has been increasingly discussed using the term 'community cohesion', which is seen as a more specific term to describe cohesion based on identifiable communities defined by faith or ethnicity, rather than social class or economic status. The term 'community cohesion' was adopted specifically in the British context following the ethnic riots in the northern cities of England in 2001. As Ted Cantle (2001) explained: 'It is easy to focus on systems, processes and institutions and to forget that community cohesion fundamentally depends on people and their values.'

The Community Cohesion Review Team was set up in the UK to investigate the underlying causes of public disturbances of 2001. It used 'community cohesion' in the title intentionally, to emphasise the role of community values and attitudes in the quest to repair ethnic relations. It developed the following definition:

A cohesive community is one where:

- There is a common vision and sense of belonging for all communities;
- The diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued;
- Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities; and
- Strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighborhoods. (Cantle 2004)

Cantle (2005: 52) developed the conceptual division between 'social cohesion' and 'community cohesion' along the following lines:

- **Social cohesion** reflects divisions based on social class and economic factors and is complemented by social capital theories relating to the 'bonding' between people and the presence of mutual trust. It is seen to be undermined by the social exclusion experienced by individuals or groups, generally by their social class and economic position.
- **Community cohesion** reflects divisions based upon identifiable communities, generally on the basis of faith or ethnic distinctions. It is also complemented by the social capital theory of 'bridging' between communities. It is undermined by the disadvantage, discrimination and disaffection experienced by the identifiable community as a whole.

The UK experience led to the narrowing of public discussion of social cohesion to the major weaknesses or ruptures in the social fabric at the level of community, ethnicity and cultural identity.

Reflecting the seemingly endless difficulties of definition, some researchers have sought description in terms of absence, in terms of that which is *not* social cohesion.

Definition is not some narrow academic or semantic exercise: it reflects a basic ideological positioning as well as the difficulties inherent in the attempt to understand the complexities of post-industrial societies. Definitions direct research questions and lead to research outcomes that can impact on government policy. Much can be at stake, so the degree of contestation over the meaning of social cohesion in the field of social research and analysis should not surprise. Discussion of the different approaches serves to draw attention to the 'consequences of the definitional choices made at all points of any analysis'. (Beauvais & Jenson 2002: 4)

While there is no one, widely accepted definition of social cohesion, the commonalities and differences in approach are clearly demarcated.

Commonalities in definition

Most current definitions dwell on the intangible, such as common values, sense of belonging, attachment to the group, willingness to participate and to share outcomes. The key elements are:

- **Shared vision:** Most researchers maintain that social cohesion requires universal values, mutual respect and common aspirations or identity shared by their members.
- **A property of a group or a community:** Social cohesion tends to describe a well-functioning core group or community in which there are shared goals and responsibilities and a readiness to co-operate with the other members.
- **A process:** Social cohesion is generally viewed not simply as an outcome, but as a continuous and seemingly never-ending process of achieving social harmony.

Differences in definition

Differences concern identification of factors that operate to enhance (and erode) the process of communal harmony, and the relative weight to be attached to the operation of specific factors. The key spheres pertain to the:

- **Economic:** levels of unemployment and poverty, income distribution, population mobility, health, life satisfaction and sense of security, and government responsiveness to issues of poverty and disadvantage.
- **Political:** levels of political participation and social involvement, including the extent of voluntarism, the development of social capital, understood in terms of networks, norms and social trust that facilitate co-ordination and co-operation for mutual benefit.
- **Socio-cultural:** levels of consensus and divergence (homogeneity and heterogeneity) on issues of local and national significance.

The National Scanlon Foundation Survey 2007

The present survey has adopted an eclectic, wide-ranging approach, influenced by the work of Jane Jenson and Paul Bernard to incorporate five elements:

1. **Belonging** – shared values, identification with Australia, trust
2. **Social justice and equity** – evaluation of national policies
3. **Participation** – voluntary work, political and co-operative involvement
4. **Acceptance (and rejection), legitimacy** – experience of discrimination, attitudes towards minorities, newcomers
5. **Worth** – life satisfaction and happiness, future expectations

The project's working definition of a socially cohesive society is one in which people:

- identify and feel a sense of **belonging** to Australia and **pride** in being Australian
- actively **participate** in political, economic and civic life
- feel **included** in relation to social justice and equality of opportunity
- **respect** minorities and newcomers and value diversity
- have **trust** in other people and **confidence** in public institutions
- are **satisfied with life** and optimistic about the future.

This definition directs attention to a process, a continuous working towards social harmony, rather than a point in time at which social cohesion may be said to have been attained.

Chapter Four

Immigration and ethnic diversity: the research context

The 2007 surveys were undertaken in an environment of sustained economic growth, high employment levels and a steadily increasing immigration intake. The level of the intake over the years 2000–07 was matched in only one period since the early 1970s, the years 1986–90. The key statistical indicators are noted below.

For over a decade Australia's economy has experienced strong growth, with a marked decline in unemployment, which by 2006 had reached the lowest levels since the early 1970s. Unemployment as a proportion of the labour force averaged 7.2% in the 1980s, 8.6% in the 1990s and 6.6% during 2000–02. In January 2005 it stood at 5.1%, in July 2007 at 4.3%.

Over these years there have been significant developments in the three areas that determine the annual net immigration outcome: permanent arrivals, conversion of temporary residency holders to permanent residency, and permanent departures, which have all shown a marked increase (with the exception of the period June 2001 to June 2003).

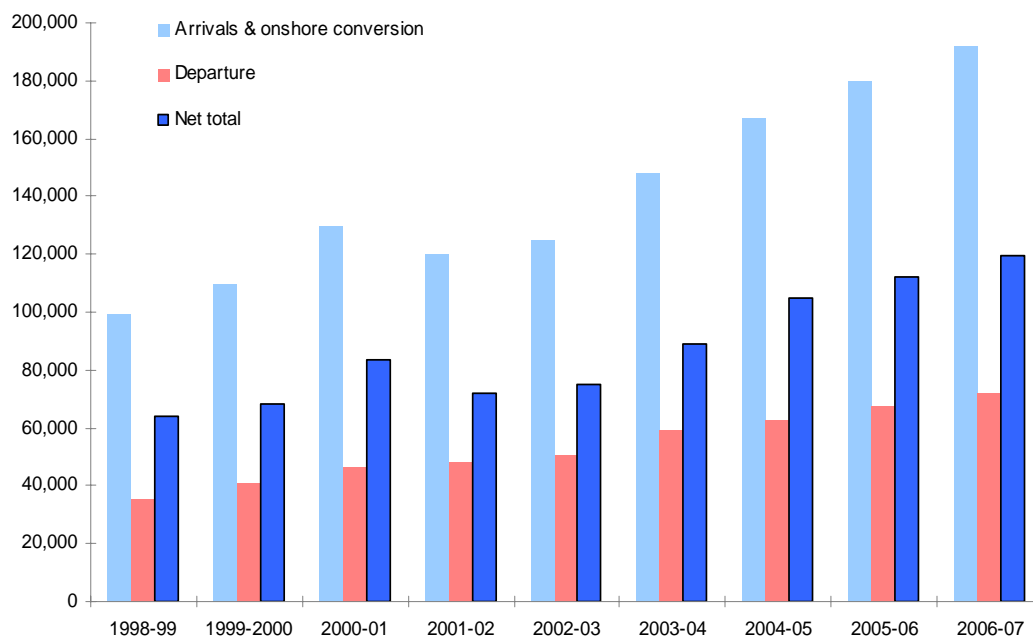
From June 1998 to June 2007 annual permanent arrivals increased from 84,200 to 140,100; the number converting to permanent residency increased from 15,100 to 51,800; permanent departures increased from 35,200 to 72,100. In terms of net change in the number of permanent residents from immigration, the annual total almost doubled over this period, from 64,100 to 119,800 (see Table 4.1, Figure 4.1). Over the financial year 2006–07 this net result contributed just over 50% of the population growth, up from 39.8% in 1998–99. The percentage of the population born overseas increased from 23.1% at the 2001 Census to 23.9% in 2006. (The method used to calculate birthplace percentage excludes the 'country of birth not stated' category from calculation of the total population.)

Table 4.1: Net change in Permanent Residents from immigration, 1998–2007 (000s)

	Permanent arrivals	Conversion onshore to permanent residence	Sub-total	Permanent departures	Net total
1998–99	84.2	15.1	99.3	35.2	64.1
1999–2000	92.3	17.3	109.6	41.1	68.5
2000–01	107.4	22.7	130.1	46.5	83.6
2001–02	88.9	31.5	120.4	48.2	72.2
2002–03	93.9	31.3	125.2	50.5	74.7
2003–04	111.6	36.7	148.3	59.1	89.2
2004–05	123.4	43.9	167.3	62.6	104.7
2005–06	131.6	48.2	179.8	67.9	111.9
2006–07	140.1	51.8	191.9	72.1	119.8

Source: Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2008), *Immigration Update 2006-2007*.

Figure 4.1: Immigration intake: arrivals and departures July 200-June 2007



On a regional basis, the largest proportion of immigrants came from Europe, followed by North-East Asia, South-East Asia and Oceania. From June 2006 to July 2007 the largest number of settlers migrated from New Zealand and the United Kingdom, with a significant drop to India and China in the second category, and then to a number of countries in the third category, led by the Philippines, South Africa and Vietnam. (Table 4.2)

**Table 4.2: Settler arrivals by birthplace 2001–02 to 2006–07
(in order of source countries 2006–07 > 2000)**

	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07
New Zealand	15,663	12,368	14,418	17,345	19,033	23,906
United Kingdom	8,749	12,508	18,272	18,220	23,290	23,223
India	5,091	5,783	8,135	9,414	11,286	13,496
China*	6,708	6,664	8,784	11,095	10,581	12,009
Philippines	2,837	3,190	4,111	4,239	4,871	5,561
South Africa	5,714	4,603	5,849	4,594	3,953	3,996
Vietnam	1,919	2,568	2,212	2,203	2,661	3,135
Malaysia	1,939	2,686	3,718	2,936	2,967	2,899
Sri Lanka	2,011	1,845	1,551	2,312	2,361	2,721
Sudan	1,078	2,775	4,591	5,654	3,783	2,513
Iraq	1,372	2,819	1,903	1,936	2,425	2,213
Afghanistan	646	964	1,221	1,531	2,547	2,186
Korea	759	903	1,075	1,788	2,117	2,092

* Figures for China exclude the Special Administrative Region and Taiwan.

Source: Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007), *Settler Arrivals 2006–2007*.

At the 2006 Census the major countries of birth of the Australian population were as shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Countries of birth, 2006

Country of birth	Total	% of total
Australia	14,072,944	76.1%
England	856,939	4.6%
New Zealand	389,463	2.1%
China	206,591	1.1%
Italy	199,121	1.1%
Vietnam	159,850	0.9%

The method used to calculate country of birth percentage excludes the 'country of birth not stated' category from calculation of the total population.

English is the only language spoken in 83.2% of homes; the other major languages are Italian (1.7%), Greek (1.3%), Cantonese (1.3%), Arabic (1.3%), Mandarin (1.2%) and Vietnamese (1.0%).

The largest proportion of settler arrivals indicated their intended state of residence to be New South Wales, followed by Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia. From 2001 to 2007 the annual number indicating Victoria as their intended state of residence increased by 13,324, Queensland by 12,815, New South Wales by 8534 and Western Australia by 8829. (Table 4.4)

Table 4.4: Settler arrivals by state or territory of intended residence, 2001–02 to 2006–07

	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05	2005–06	2006–07
New South Wales	35,301	36,431	40,561	44,746	44,661	43,835
Victoria	21,374	23,109	28,028	30,581	32,297	34,698
Queensland	15,825	16,182	20,284	22,660	24,862	28,640
South Australia	3,316	3,657	4,773	6,364	9,099	10,061
Western Australia	10,954	12,279	15,411	16,318	17,638	19,783
Tasmania	589	811	884	944	879	968

Source: Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2007), *Settler Arrivals 2006–2007*.

Of the capital cities, at the 2006 Census the largest proportion of overseas-born resided in Sydney (34.5%), followed closely by Perth (33.7%) and Melbourne (31.0%); one-quarter of Adelaide's population is overseas-born (25.1%), slightly ahead of Brisbane (23.2%). Of the capitals, Hobart has by far the lowest proportion at 12.8%. While for the mainland capitals the proportion of overseas-born is thus in the range 1:5 to 1:3, this population is unevenly spread, leading to concentrations above 50% in a few LGAs; in a number of smaller statistical regions the proportion overseas-born exceeds 70%.

Precise comparison between cities is made difficult because of varying local government jurisdictions. Sydney has a number of small LGAs with population in the range 30,000 to 50,000, while amalgamations in Melbourne have left few LGAs with populations under 80,000. Statistics for large population areas do not adequately represent the concentration of the overseas-born. The Brisbane City Council administers a population just under 1,000,000. Within this largest of Australian LGAs, the proportion born overseas is 25.7%. There are, however, a number of SLAs in Brisbane (mostly with populations in the range 5000 to 12,000) where the proportion born overseas exceeds 40%.

In Melbourne the largest proportion of overseas-born residents is located within the LGA of Greater Dandenong – 56.0% are overseas-born and 61.5% speak a language other than English in their homes. The next largest proportion is in the central Melbourne LGA, where 49.4% are overseas born and 47.9% speak a language other than English in their homes. In Sydney there are five LGAs where the overseas-born exceed 50% and 11 LGAs where over 50% speak a language other than English, with the highest proportion in Auburn (77.9%) and Fairfield (72.5%). (See Tables 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7)

Table 4.5: Melbourne LGAs, key variables, ranked by proportion born overseas – LGAs selected for local area surveys highlighted in blue

	Location	Population	Age	Overseas born	English only spoken at home	Language other than English spoken at home	Household income \$/ week	Employed full-time	Unemployed
			Median	%	%	%	Median	%	%
Melbourne statistical region		3,592,591	36	31.0	68.1	31.9	1,079	61.0	5.3
Greater Dandenong	Inner South	125,520	36	56.0	38.5	61.5	770	60.3	9.4
Melbourne	Central	71,380	28	49.4	52.1	47.9	1,081	63.0	7.5
Brimbank	Inner N-West	168,215	35	46.8	40.7	59.3	921	59.3	8.9
Maribyrnong	Inner West	63,141	34	42.6	49.8	50.2	932	60.9	8.5
Monash	Inner East	161,241	38	42.2	56.7	43.3	1,108	59.4	5.6
Manningham	Inner N-East	109,915	41	35.8	60.7	39.3	1,213	58.9	4.2
Moreland	Inner N-West	135,764	36	34.9	54.6	45.4	931	60.8	6.1
Darebin	Inner N-East	128,067	36	34.9	54.4	45.6	905	59.6	6.5
Whittlesea	Outer North	124,647	34	34.6	52.9	47.1	1,043	61.9	5.9
Glen Eira	Inner S-East	124,083	38	34.5	67.6	32.4	1,111	60.6	4.1
Casey	Outer S-East	214,960	32	32.3	71.6	28.4	1,097	62.9	5.3
Hume	Outer North	147,781	32	31.4	58.3	41.7	1,030	60.6	7.0
Port Phillip	Central	85,096	35	31.4	69.9	30.1	1,193	69.3	4.4
Hobsons Bay	Inner West	81,459	37	31.3	66.6	33.4	1,023	62.8	5.9
Yarra	Central	69,330	33	31.0	66.9	33.1	1,196	65.6	5.1
Whitehorse	Inner East	144,768	38	30.6	71.1	28.9	1,101	59.6	4.6
Kingston	Inner S-East	134,626	38	30.3	72.2	27.8	1,045	62.1	4.5
Stonnington	Central	89,883	36	30.0	72.0	28.0	1,346	64.1	4.1
Moonee Valley	Inner N-West	107,090	37	28.8	65.0	35.0	1,066	62.0	5.1
Boroondara	Inner East	154,450	38	27.1	75.0	25.0	1,517	59.3	3.9
Wyndham	Outer West	112,695	32	26.9	73.4	26.6	1,147	63.7	5.4
Knox	Inner East	146,740	36	26.4	79.2	20.8	1,144	61.6	4.2
Melton	Outer West	78,912	31	25.9	70.2	29.8	1,122	63.9	5.9
Bayside	Inner S-East	87,936	41	23.8	83.3	16.7	1,440	59.1	3.3
Frankston	Outer S-East	117,801	36	22.5	86.0	14.0	956	59.6	6.0
Banyule	Inner N-East	114,866	38	20.8	79.2	20.8	1,124	60.3	4.2
Maroondah	Inner East	99,200	37	19.6	87.1	12.9	1,079	60.6	3.9
Yarra Ranges	Outer East	140,217	37	17.2	90.7	9.3	1,078	59.2	4.1
Cardinia	Outer S-East	57,115	35	15.1	91.0	9.0	1,078	60.5	4.2
Nillumbik	Outer North	59,792	36	14.8	89.4	10.6	1,522	58.4	3

The method used to calculate percentage born overseas excludes the 'country of birth not stated' category from calculation of the total population. Additional statistical information derived from Australian Bureau of Statistics *Quickstats* summary census data for the specific statistical areas.

Table 4.6: Sydney LGAs, key variables, ranked by proportion born overseas – LGAs selected for local area surveys highlighted in blue

	Location	Population	Age	Overseas born	English only spoken at home	Language other than English spoken at home	Household income \$/ weekly	Employed full-time	Unemployed
			Median	%	%	%	Median	%	%
Sydney major statistical region		4,119,190	35	34.5	64.0	36.0	1,154	63.1	5.3
Auburn	Outer West	64,959	31	59.2	22.1	77.9	906	61.1	9.1
Fairfield	Outer West	179,893	34	55.3	27.5	72.5	873	60.2	10.5
Strathfield	Inner West	31,983	34	54.6	41.5	58.5	1,093	61.3	5.9
Burwood	Inner West	30,926	36	53.9	37.2	62.8	1,071	59.8	6.5
Canterbury	Inner West	129,963	36	51.3	30.1	69.9	839	60.1	7.9
Ashfield	Inner West	39,667	37	47.0	49.0	51.0	1,101	63.6	5.4
Sydney	Inner	156,571	32	46.2	51.9	48.1	1,204	68.7	5.3
Rockdale	Inner South	92,126	37	45.3	41.4	58.6	1,035	63.6	5.4
Botany Bay	Inner South	35,993	37	45.1	50.1	49.9	995	63.8	5.4
Parramatta	Outer West	148,323	34	43.8	48.8	51.2	1,043	62.9	6.7
Holroyd	Outer West	89,766	34	42.6	48.6	51.4	998	64.1	6.9
Liverpool	Outer West	164,603	32	41.3	47.1	52.9	1,082	64.3	7.1
Ryde	Outer West	96,948	37	40.4	58	42.0	1,158	63.8	4.7
Hurstville	Inner South	73,725	38	39.9	52.1	47.9	1,060	62.4	5.6
Randwick	Inner South	119,884	35	39.5	62.8	37.2	1,185	64.2	4.5
Bankstown	Outer West	170,489	35	38.7	43.5	56.5	926	61.0	7.4
Marrickville	Inner West	71,813	35	38.4	58.4	41.6	1,160	66.2	5.1
North Sydney	Inner North	58,257	35	37.7	73.0	27.0	1,772	73.1	2.9
Blacktown	Outer West	271,709	32	36.7	62.1	37.9	1,105	64.9	6.8
Ku-ring-gai	Outer North	101,083	41	33.8	79.7	20.3	2,147	58.3	3.2
Mosman	Inner North	26,236	40	32.4	82.7	17.3	1,916	66.6	2.6
Lane Cove	Inner North	30,427	37	32.1	75.3	24.7	1,729	66.7	3.0
Baulkham Hills	Outer N-West	159,391	36	31.1	72.5	27.5	1,732	63.6	3.2
Leichhardt	Inner West	48,776	36	29.8	78.1	21.9	1,733	70.0	3.2
Campbelltown	Outer S-West	143,076	32	28.2	72.2	27.8	1,066	62.9	7.5
Warringah	Outer North	133,837	38	27.9	80.7	19.3	1,387	63.1	2.6
Penrith	Outer West	172,140	32	21.8	81.9	18.1	1,147	64.3	5.3
Sutherland Shire	Outer S-West	205,448	37	17.5	85.6	14.4	1,374	62.5	2.9
Camden	Outer S-West	49,645	32	16.2	87.3	12.7	1,353	64.4	3.9

The method used to calculate percentage born overseas excludes the 'country of birth not stated' category from calculation of the total population. Additional statistical information derived from Australian Bureau of Statistics *Quickstats* summary census data for the specific statistical areas.

Table 4.7: Brisbane LGA and Statistical Local Areas (SLAs), key variables, ranked by proportion born overseas – SLAs ranked by proportion born overseas and those selected for local area surveys highlighted in blue

	Location	Population	Age	Overseas born	English only spoken at home	Language other than English spoken at home	Household income \$/ weekly	Employed full-time	Unemployed	
			Median	%	%	%	Median	%	%	
(Brisbane major statistical region)		1,763,131	35	23.2	83.9	16.1	1,111	62.7	4.4	
LGA										
Brisbane		956,129	34	25.7	79.8	20.2	1,157	63.3	4.0	
SLA										
Stretton-Karawatha		Outer S-East	3,812	34	54.7	45.8	54.2	1,482	60.9	5.4
Sunnybank		Outer South	7,846	35	44.6	57.7	42.3	942	55.1	7.8
Runcorn		Outer S-East	12,476	31	44.0	61.5	38.5	1,099	61.0	5.4
Eight Mile Plains		Outer S-East	12,017	33	43.6	61.1	38.9	1,161	61.9	4.5
Sunnybank Hills		Outer South	16,109	35	43.2	59.4	40.6	1,105	60.5	5.1
Calamvale		Outer South	10,177	32	43.2	61.2	38.8	1,269	63.6	4.1
Spring Hill		Inner City	5,237	30	41.6	53.9	46.1	1,194	64.1	6.0
Fortitude Valley		Inner City	5,387	29	34.8	63.6	36.4	1,145	70.7	4.9
Algester		Outer South	8,165	34	30.6	81.4	18.6	1,122	65.7	4.2
Annerley		Inner South	9,571	33	29.1	73.5	26.5	1,017	63.0	4.6
New Farm		Inner City	10,943	37	28.4	72.0	28.0	1,144	69.7	3.9
Wishart		Outer S-East	10,270	36	27.4	76.5	23.5	1,268	62.9	3.4
Greenslopes		Inner South	8,088	33	26.9	77.8	22.2	1,063	67.1	4.0
Moorooka		Inner South	9,194	36	26.1	76.0	24.0	1,039	63.4	4.4
Newstead		Inner City	4,821	32	25.2	81.1	18.9	1,821	77.2	2.1
Tarragindi		Inner South	9,441	37	16.1	89.2	10.8	1,292	62.3	2.8

The method used to calculate percentage born overseas excludes the 'country of birth not stated' category from calculation of the total population. Additional statistical information derived from Australian Bureau of Statistics *Quickstats* summary census data for the specific statistical areas.

The distribution of the overseas born can be most directly accessed by mapping of census collector districts. For the purposes of the present discussion, attention is directed to the three eastern capitals.

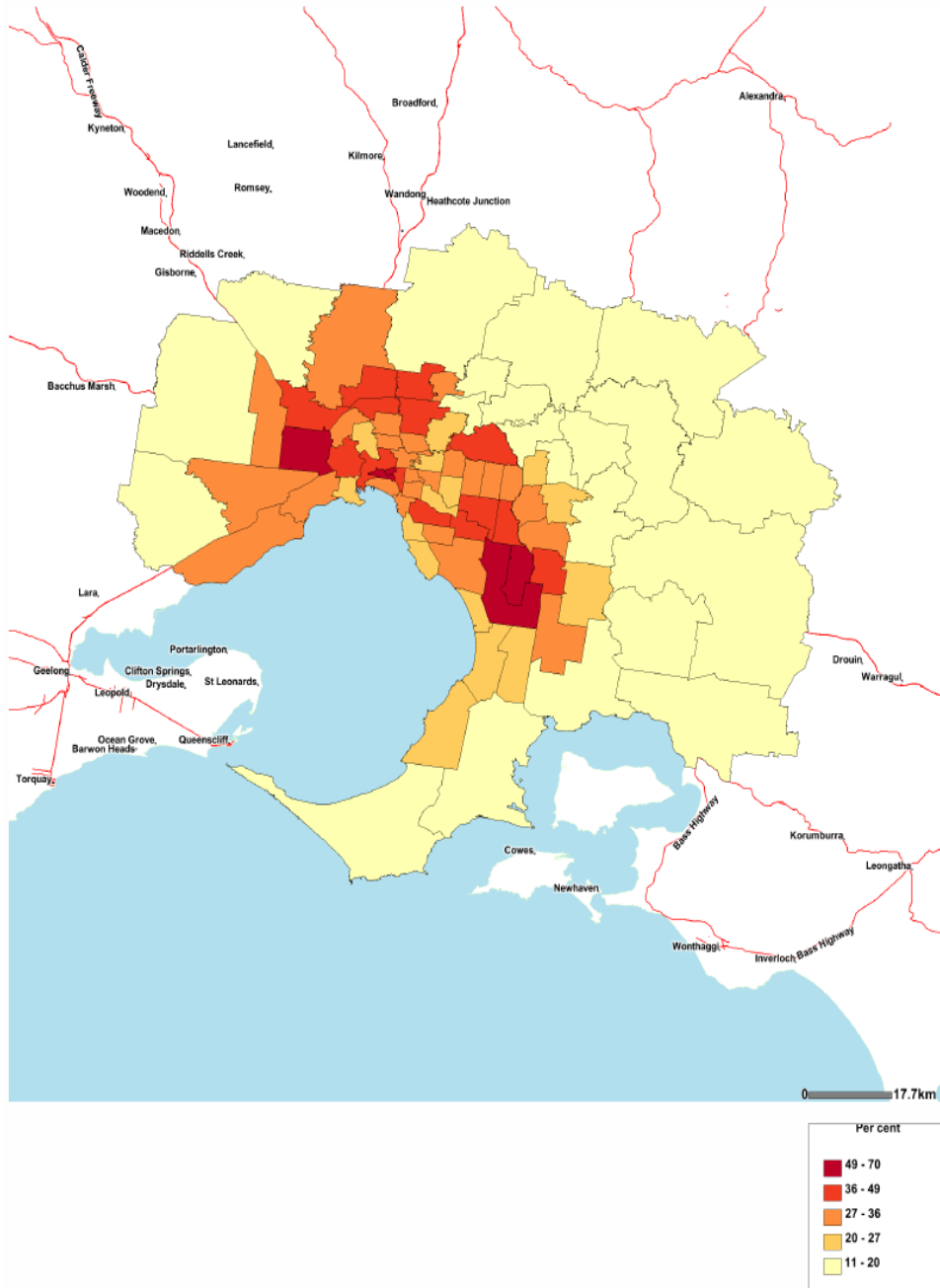
- [Maps 4.1 to 4.3](#) present an overview of Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. In Melbourne, overseas-born concentrations in the range 49%-70% are located in central, south-eastern and western parts of the city; in Sydney concentrations in the range 60%-74% are located in the central and western region; in Brisbane concentrations in the range 39%-58% are located in the central and southern region, with a small additional concentration in the south-west
- [Maps 4.4 to 4.7](#) direct attention to concentrations within LGAs with the highest proportion of overseas-born; in Greater Dandenong concentrations in the range 80%-100% are located, in the Sydney LGAs of Auburn and Fairfield concentrations above 70%, and in the Brisbane Statistical Local Area of Stretton-Karawatha in the range 59%-62%
- [Maps 4.8 to 4.10](#) highlight the impact of recent arrivals, defined as those who arrived in Australia between 1 January 2001 and the census date of August 2006; concentrations greater than 40% of the overseas-born are evident in central and parts of south-eastern Melbourne and central and parts of western Sydney; the more extensive distribution of the proportion greater than 29% in Brisbane reflects the impact of overseas arrivals on a relatively small overseas-born population base

Map 4.1



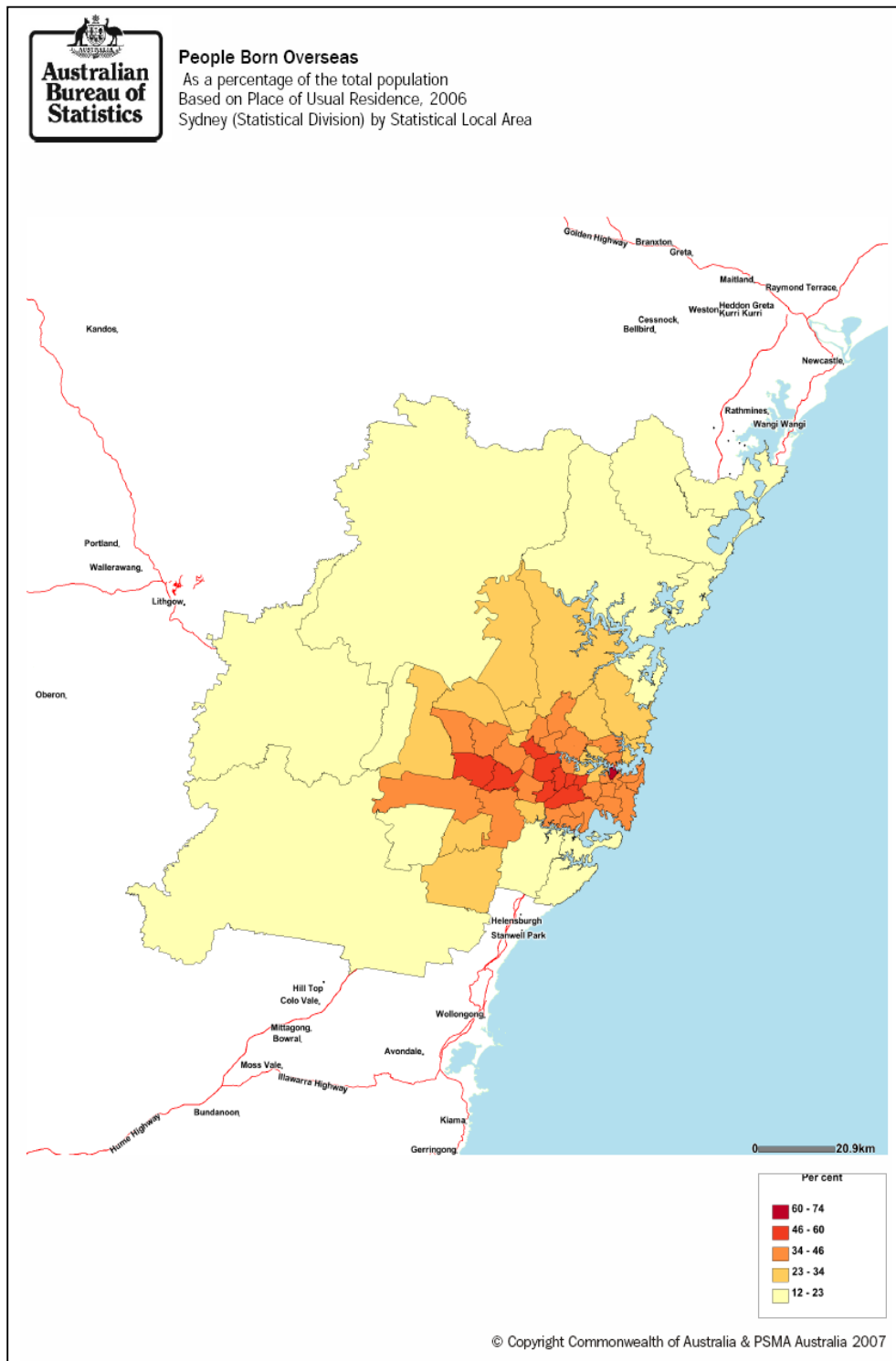
People Born Overseas

As a percentage of the total population
Based on Place of Usual Residence, 2006
Melbourne (Statistical Division) by Statistical Local Area

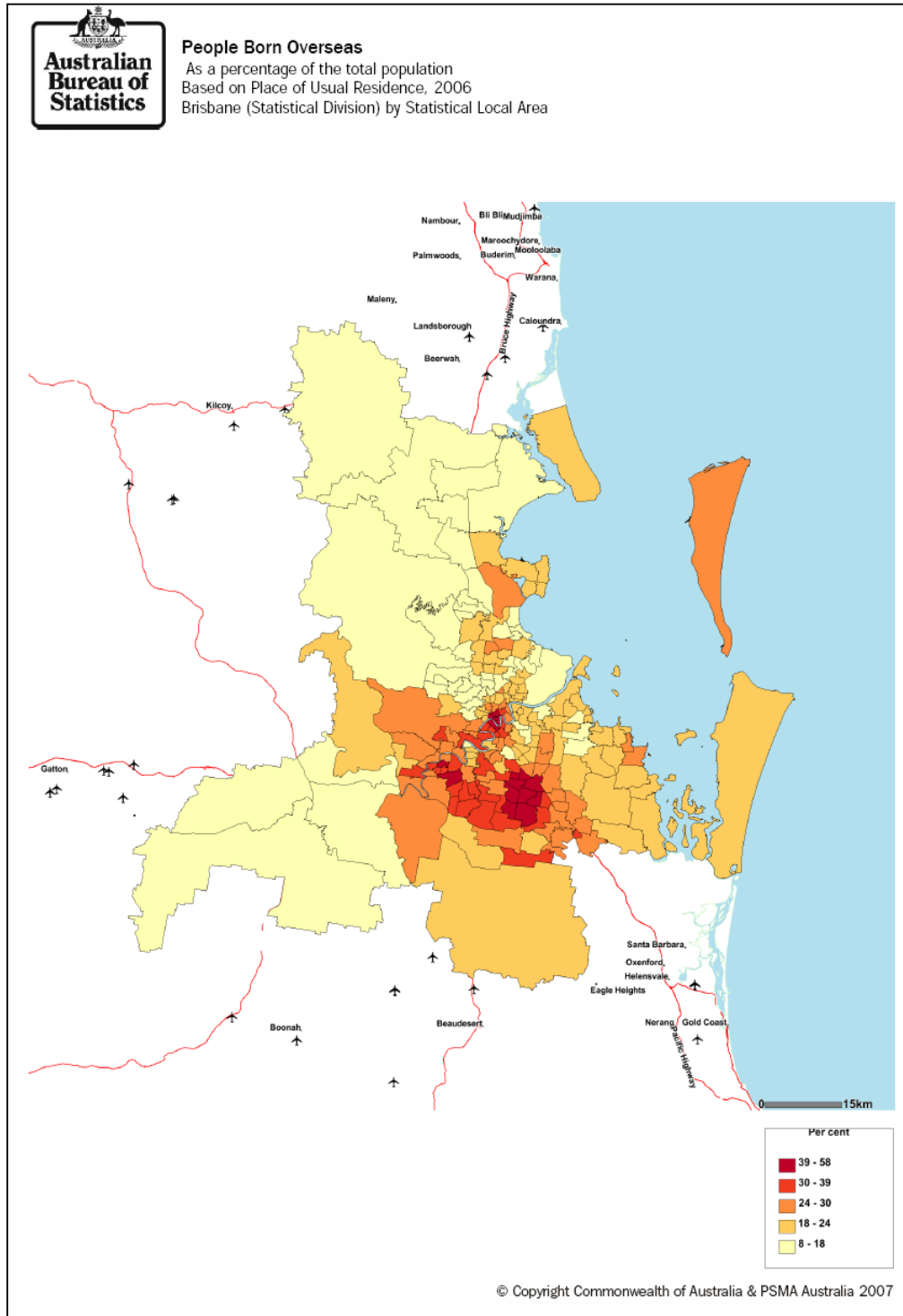


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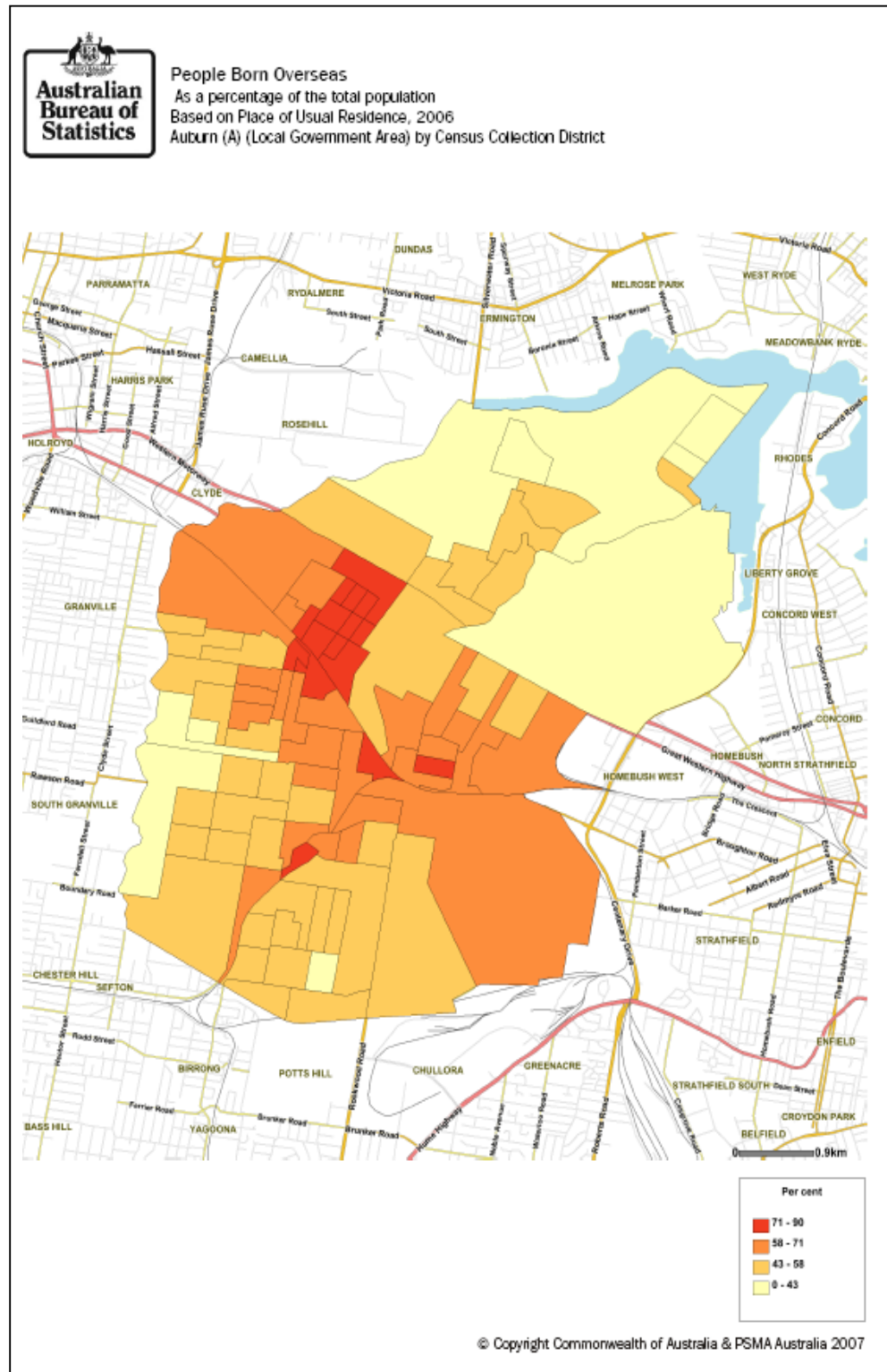
Map 4.2



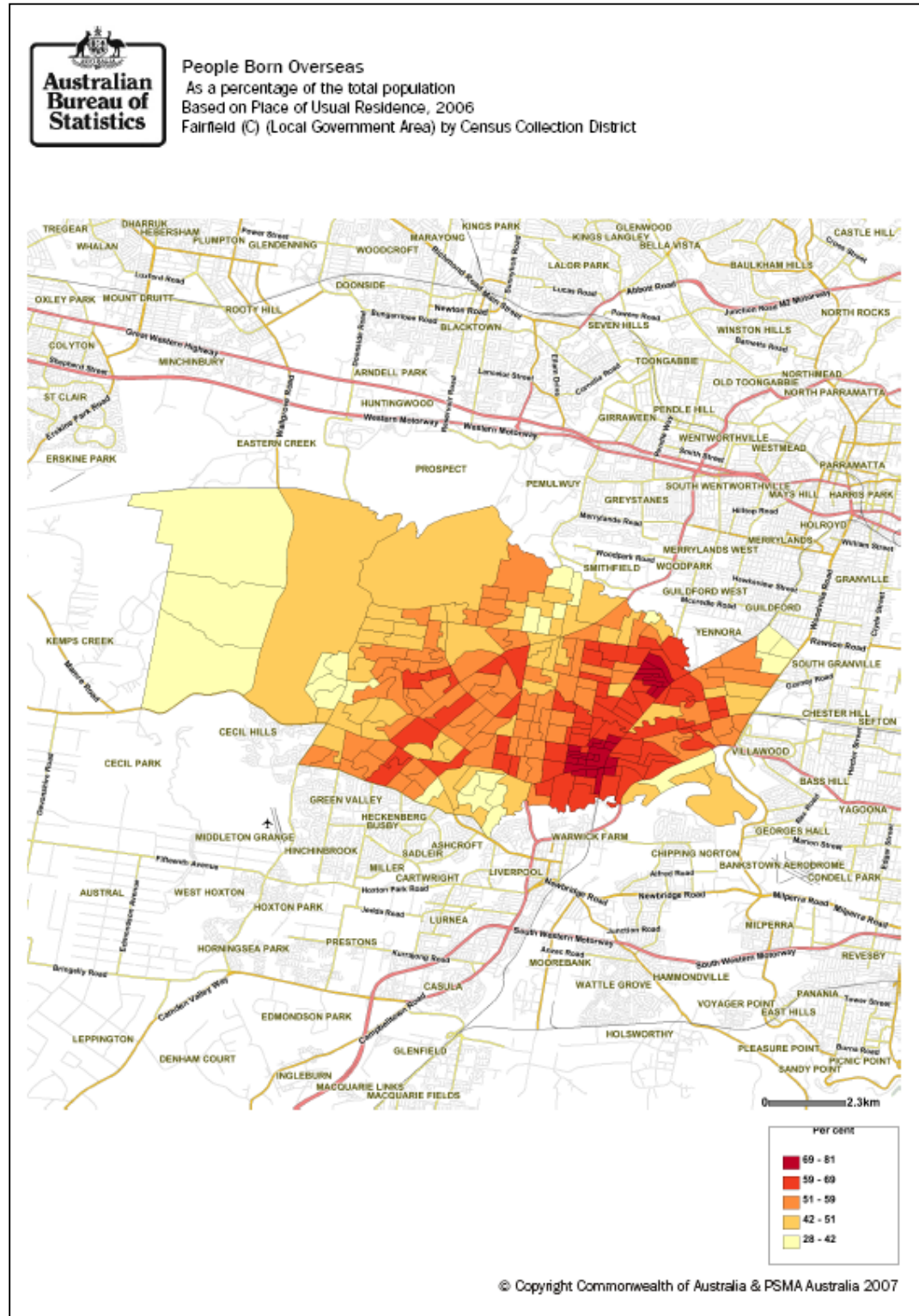
Map 4.3



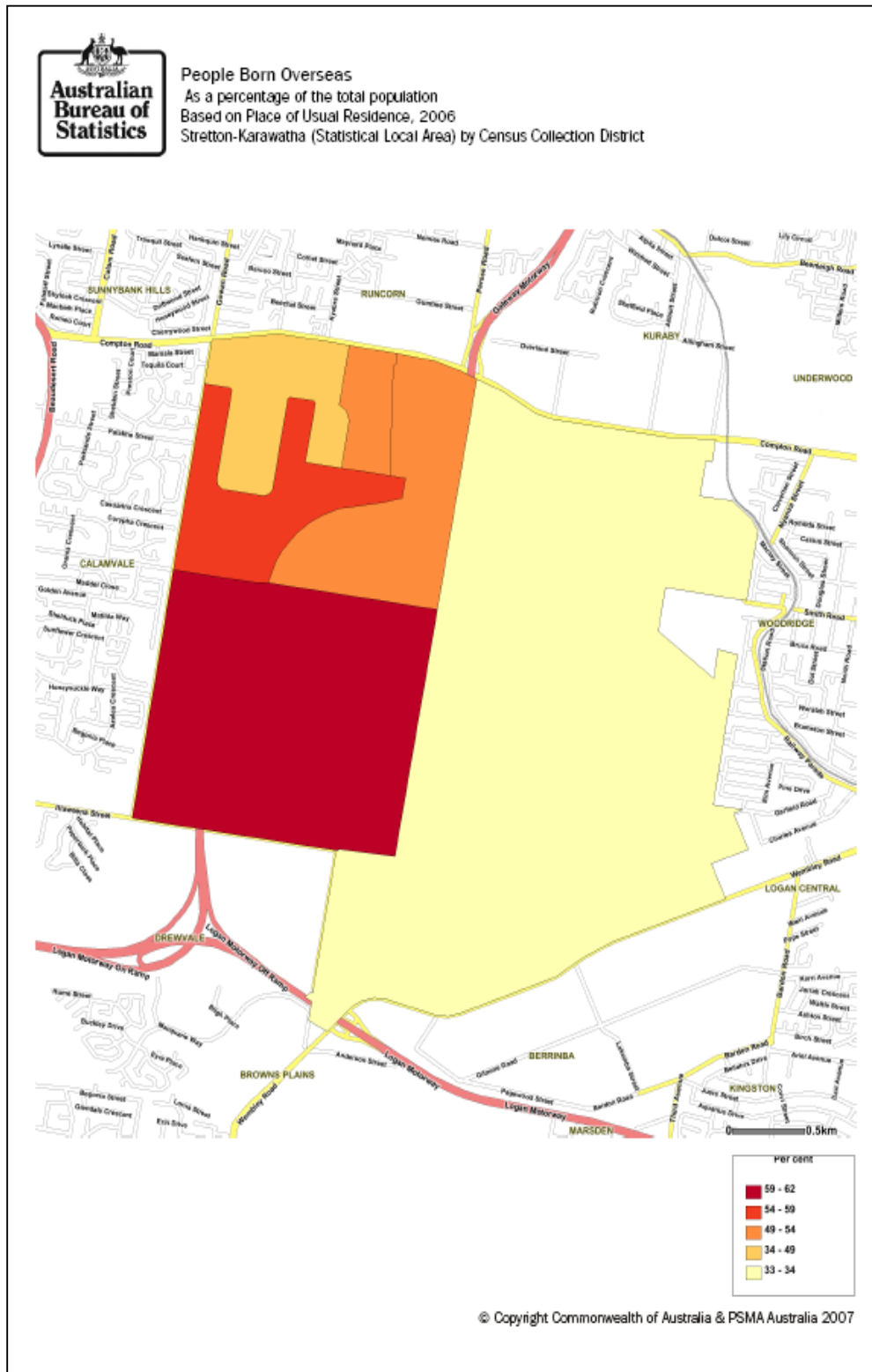
Map 4.5



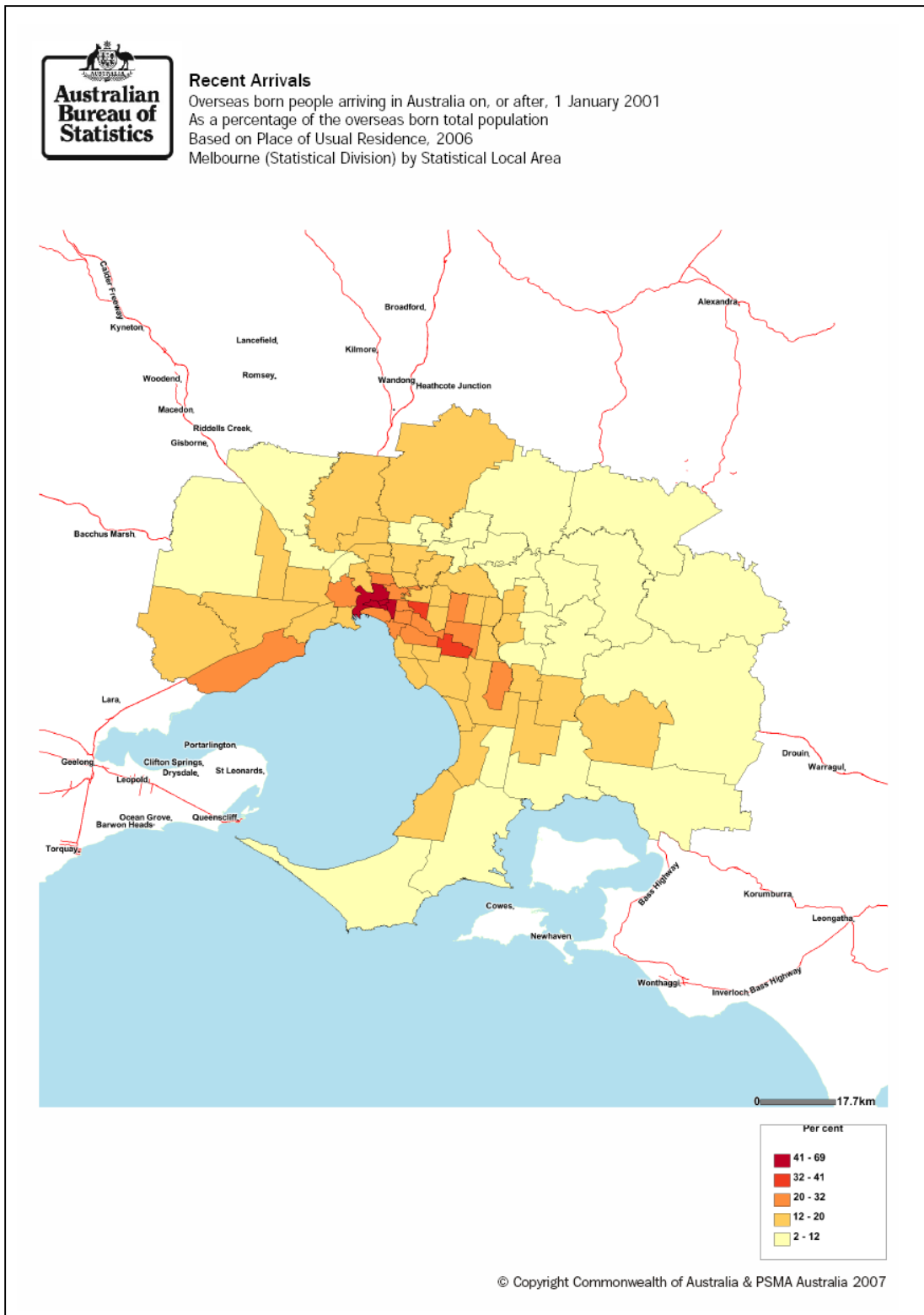
Map 4.6



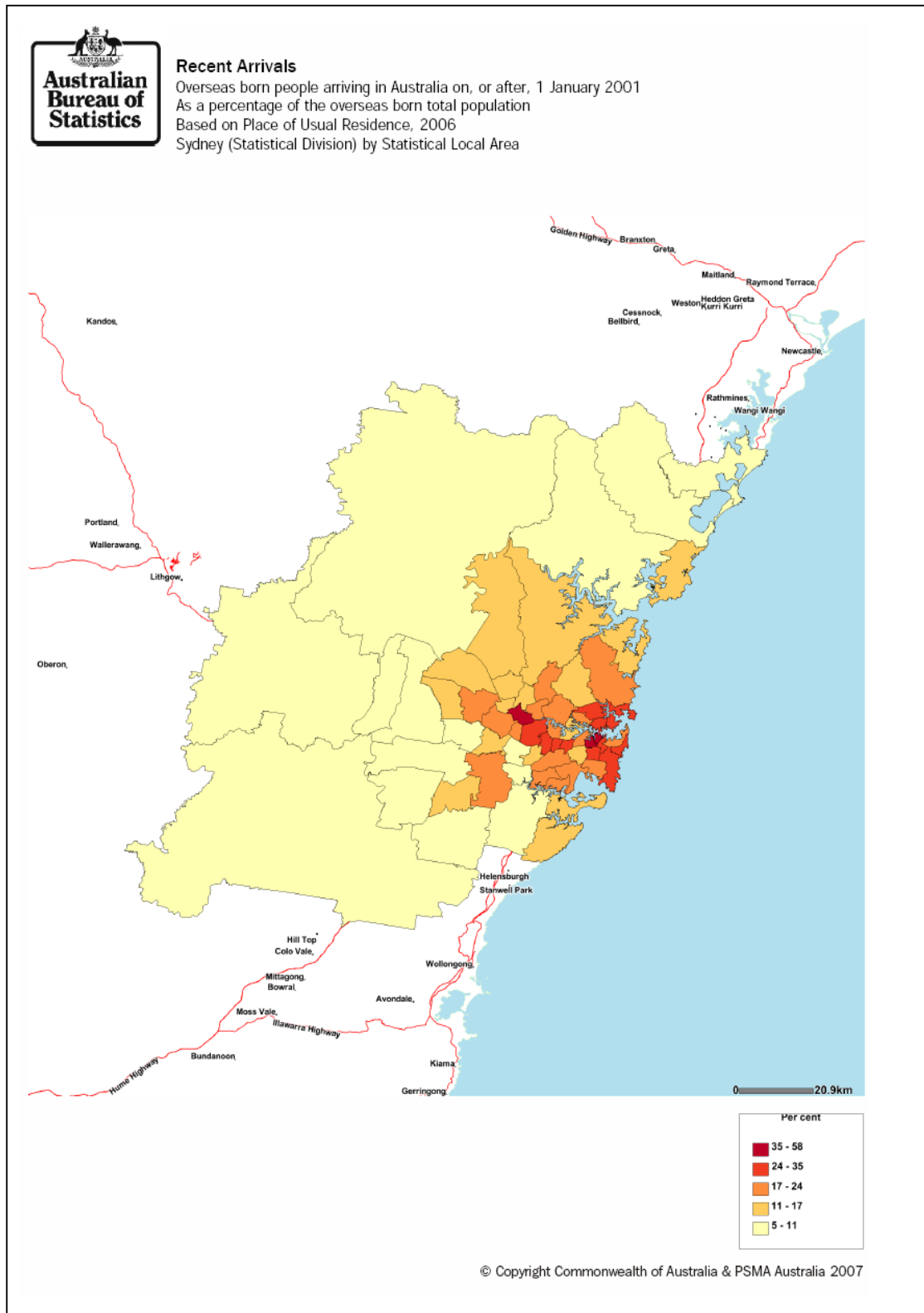
Map 4.7



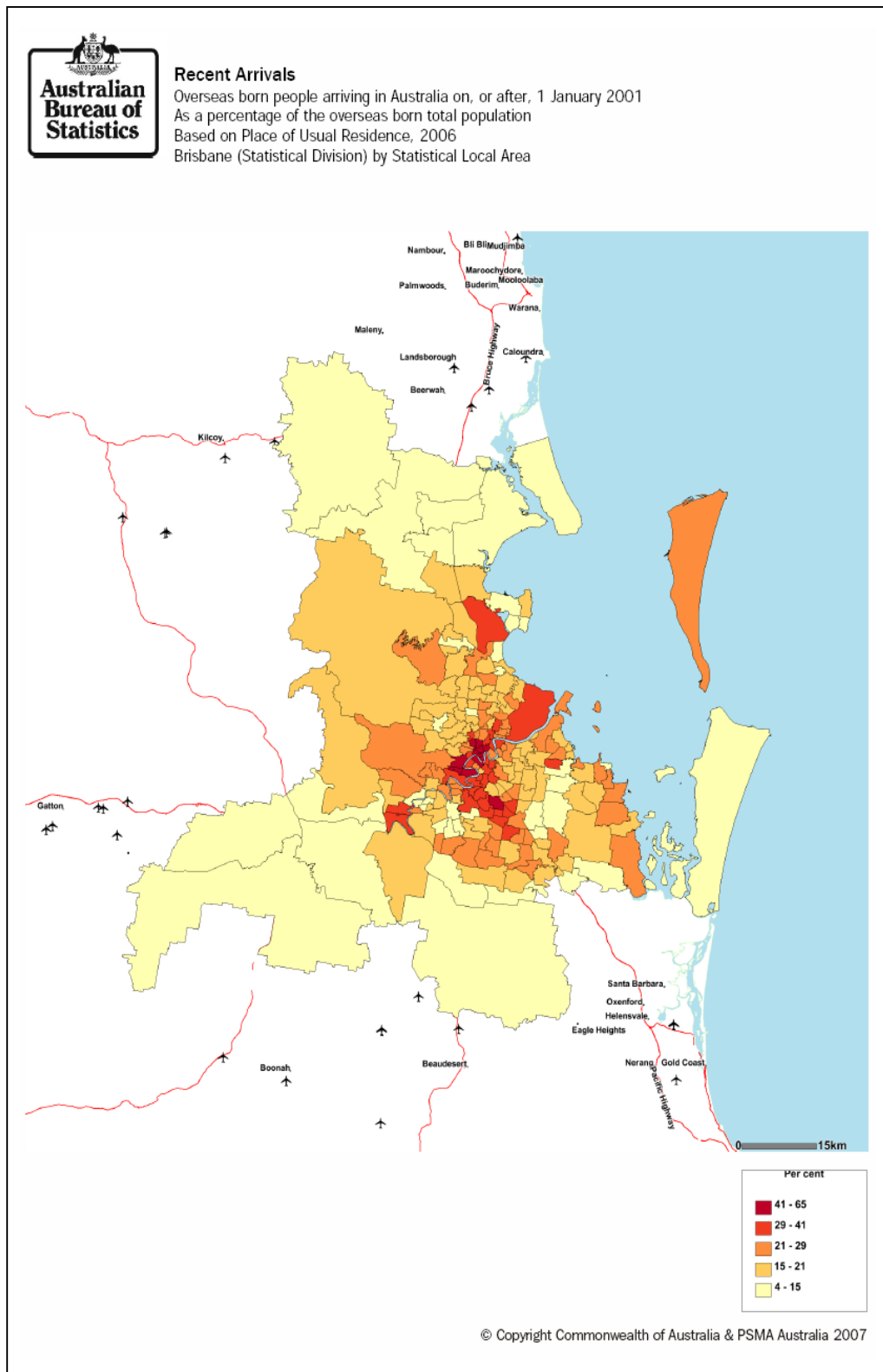
Map 4.8



Map 4.9



Map 4.10



Local areas survey

To meet local study design specifications, four objectives for drawing of samples were required to be met: identification of [1] areas of high immigrant concentration, with [2] large number of Australian-, [3] Asian- and [4] Middle East- born populations.

The maps in the following section (Maps 4.11-4.20) cover the distribution in Sydney and Melbourne of populations of South-East Asian and Middle East origin. They bring to notice the highly concentrated nature of the target birthplace groups within the LGAs chosen for local area surveys.

Utilising the first stage of mapping undertaken for this project, two LGAs with substantial total (> 100,000) and large overseas-born populations were selected in Melbourne and Sydney: Greater Dandenong and Fairfield. Greater Dandenong has a total population of 125,520, and as noted has the largest proportion (56.0%) in Melbourne of overseas-born and of those who speak a language other than English (61.5%) in their homes. Fairfield has a total population of 179,893 and at 55.3% Sydney's second largest proportion of overseas-born, with 72.5% who speak a language other than English in their homes. (See Tables 4.5, 4.6.) Both LGAs thus meet the requirement for large Australian-born populations as well as substantial numbers born in Asian countries: 32,340 in Dandenong (59% from the South-East Asian region, 31% from South and Central Asia), 43,648 in Fairfield (88% from the South-East Asian region).

The third LGA was chosen in Brisbane, in the city's region of highest overseas-born population: some 54.7% in the Statistical Local Area of Stretton-Karawatha, 43.2% in the neighbouring Calamvale. Both have relatively small total populations in which Asian origin (3,160) predominates amongst the overseas-born.

For the Middle East origin sample, the LGAs of Auburn and Hume were selected. Sydney, with 112,595, has more than double Melbourne's population of Middle East origin (50,381). Auburn is the Sydney LGA with the highest proportion (59.2%) of overseas-born and at 77.9% the highest proportion who speak a language other than English in their homes. Auburn has a Middle East origin population of 6,700; it neighbours LGAs with high populations of Middle East origin, principally Canterbury, Bankstown, Fairfield and Holroyd, with a total Middle East origin population in the five LGAs of 54,000. In Melbourne the largest Middle East origin population at 13,768 is located in the northern LGA of Hume; considerably smaller numbers, totaling 12,000, are located in the three neighbouring LGAs of Moreland, Whittlesea and Darebin.

The demographic features of the five LGAs chosen for local areas surveys are summarised in the following:

Greater Dandenong (LGA, Victoria)

Located in the south-east of Melbourne (over 30 km from the CBD), Greater Dandenong has a population of 125,520 and claims to be the most culturally and linguistically diverse LGA in Victoria with some 150 national groups. The median weekly income is the second lowest of the five areas studied (\$342, compared with \$481 for the Melbourne statistical region). The proportion born overseas has risen from 38% in 1991 to 56.0% in 2006, with an overseas born concentration in the 80%-100% range in parts of the LGA, the highest for local areas studied. 82.2% of the population has one or both parents born overseas. 19% of the overseas born population (9.8% of the total population) arrived since January 2001. 61.5% of the residents speak a language other than English in their homes, a much lower proportion than for the Sydney LGAs included in the survey. 25.5% of the overseas born (totaling 16,480) speak English not well or not at all. 10.4% of the population speak Vietnamese and 4.1% Khmer. The largest non-Christian religious affiliations are Buddhism (15%) and Islam (7.9%).

Hume (LGA, Victoria)

Located north-west of Melbourne (some 20 km from the CBD), Hume is in one of Australia's fastest growth regions. It has a population of 147,781 and includes more than 130 national groups. The median weekly income is \$403, the highest of areas surveyed in Melbourne and Sydney. The overseas born proportion is relatively low (31.4%) amongst the areas surveyed, but there are overseas born concentrations in the 45%-61% range in the south-eastern parts of the LGA. 64.2% of the population has one or both parents born overseas. 13.9% of the overseas born population (4.1% of the total population) arrived since January 2001. 41.7% of the residents speak a language other than English in their homes, the lowest proportion for the five areas surveyed. 17.9% of the overseas born speak English not well or not at all. Hume has Melbourne's largest proportion of residents of Middle East origin; 7.9% of the population speaks Turkish and 6.2% Arabic. The largest non-Christian religious affiliation is Islam (13.3%).

Auburn (LGA, New South Wales)

Located west of Sydney (some 20 km from the CBD), Auburn has a population of 64,959. The median weekly income is the second lowest of the five areas studied (\$343, compared with \$518 for the Sydney statistical region). 59.2% of the population is overseas born, with an overseas born concentration in the 71-90% in parts of the LGA. 89% of the population has one or both parents born overseas. 25.7% of the overseas born population (13.6% of the total population) arrived since January 2001. 77.9% speak a language other than English in their homes, the highest proportion in the five local areas studied. 27.8% of the overseas born speak English not well or not at all. 12.5% of the population speak Arabic, 10.6% Cantonese, 7.2% Turkish and 7% Mandarin. The largest non-Christian religious affiliations are Islam (24.8%) and Buddhism (9.2%).

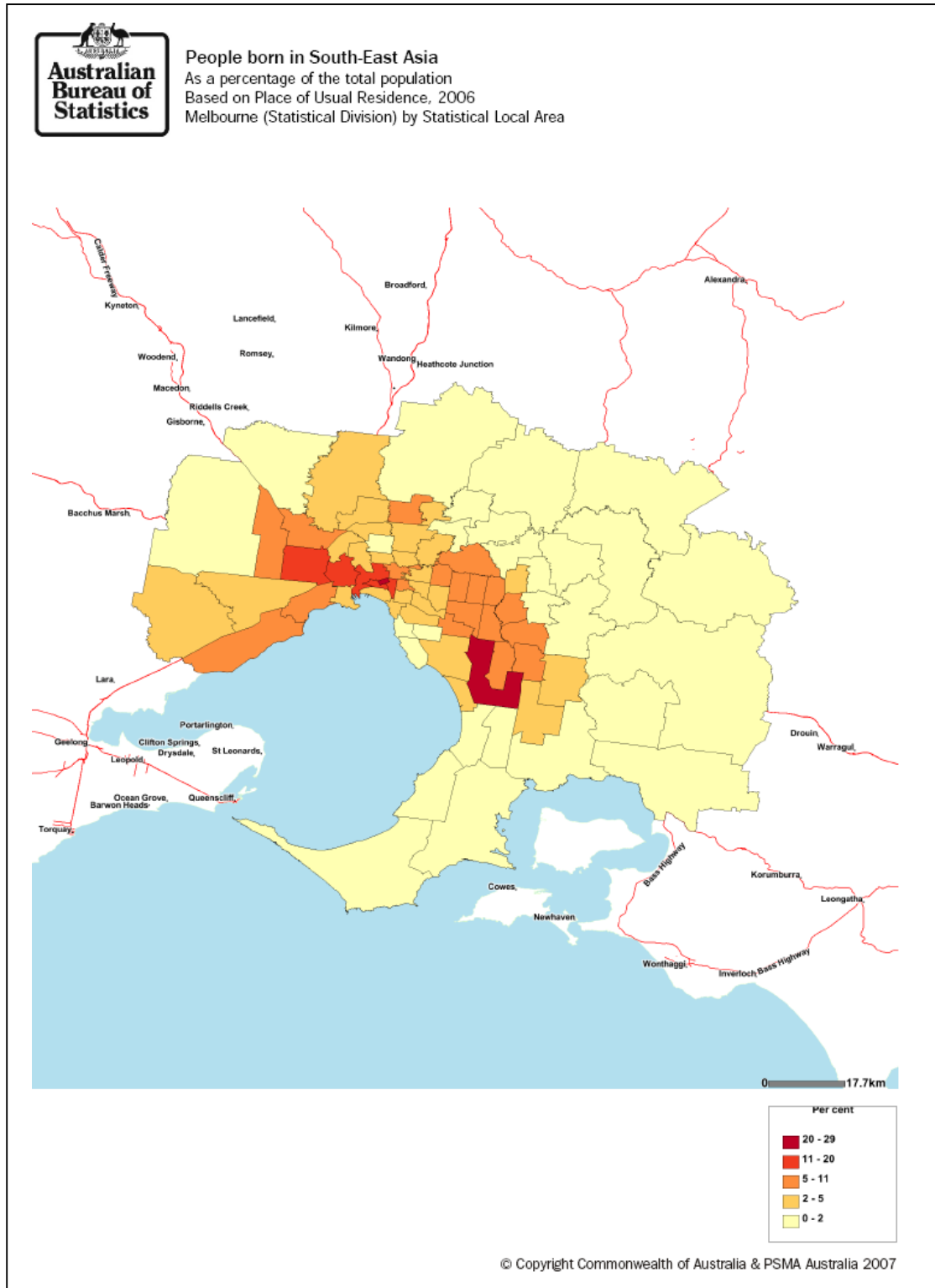
Fairfield (LGA, New South Wales)

Located in the outer western region of Sydney (over 30 km from the CBD, some 10 km west of Auburn), Fairfield is one of the largest LGAs with a population of 179,893. It has the lowest median weekly income of the five local areas studied (\$319). 55.3% of the population is overseas born, with the overseas born in the range 69-81% in parts of the LGA. 86.8% of the population has one or both parents born overseas. 11.3% of the overseas born population (5.8% of the total population) arrived since January 2001. The 2001 census indicated that of the overseas born, 95% were from a non-English speaking country. 72.5% speak a language other than English in their homes. 32.3% of the overseas born (totaling 29,929) speak English not well or not at all. 17% of the population speak Vietnamese, 6.4% Arabic, 6.1% Assyrian and 5.6% Cantonese. The largest non-Christian religious affiliation is Buddhism (22.1%)

Stretton-Karawatha and Calamvale (SLAs, Queensland)

The Statistical Local Areas of Stretton-Karawatha and Calamvale are located in a developing region, part of the outer south-east of Brisbane (over 20 km south from the CBD). The SLAs have a combined population of almost 15,000. The median weekly income is the highest of the five areas studied (\$461 in Stretton-Karawatha and \$522 in Calamvale, compared with \$516 for the Brisbane statistical region). 54.7% of the population of Stretton-Karawatha and 43.2% of Calamvale is born overseas, with the highest concentration in the range 59%-62% within the southern half of Stretton-Karawatha and 46%-48% in parts of Calamvale. 70.1% of the population has one or both parents born overseas. 20% of the overseas born population (8.8% of the total population) arrived since January 2001. In Stretton-Karawatha 54.2% of the residents speak a language other than English in their homes; of these, 14.3% speak Mandarin and 10.4% Cantonese. In Calamvale 38.8% speak a language other than English in their homes; 6.7% speak Mandarin and 5.9% Cantonese. 13.6% of the overseas born in the two SLAs speak English not well or not at all. The largest non-Christian religious affiliations are Buddhism (12% in Stretton-Karawatha, 6.3% in Calamvale) and Islam (6.8% in Stretton-Karawatha).

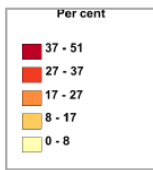
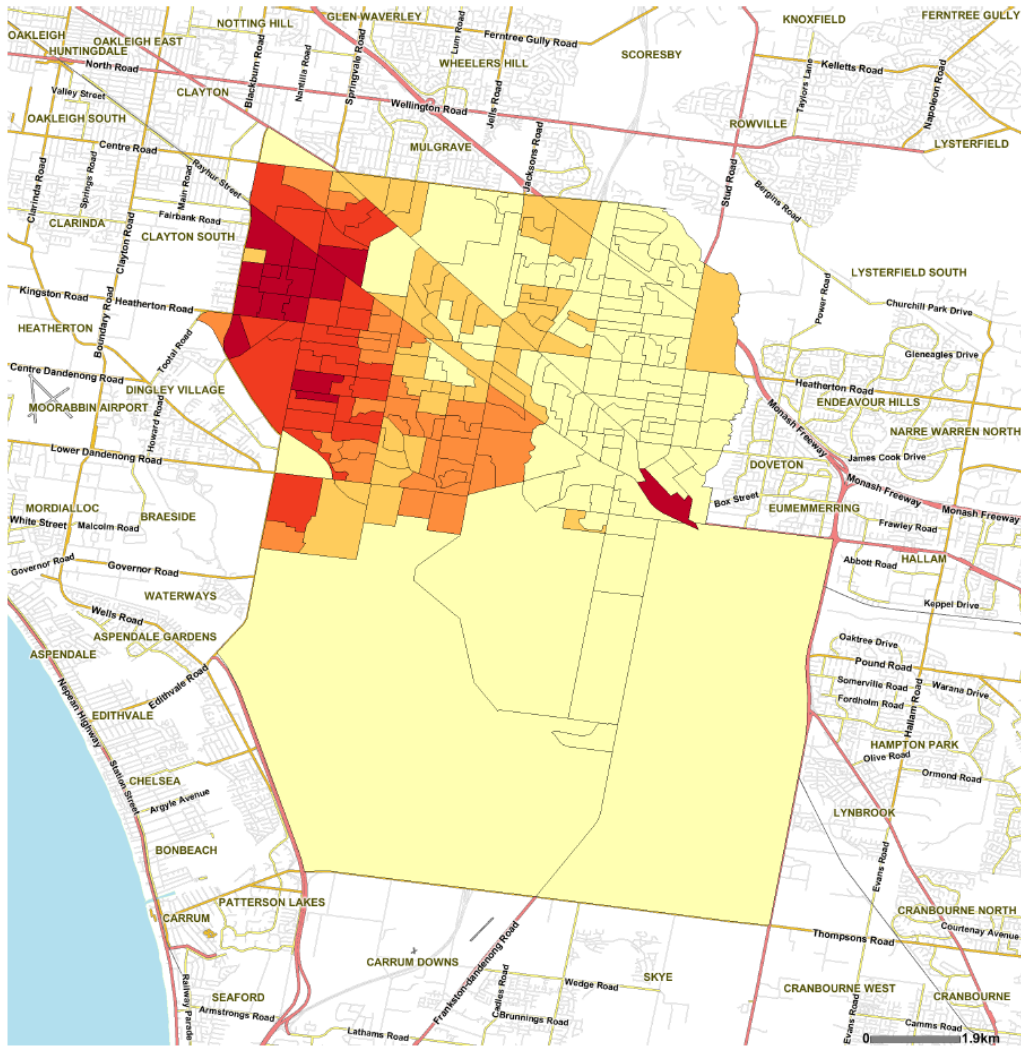
Map 4.11



Map 4.12

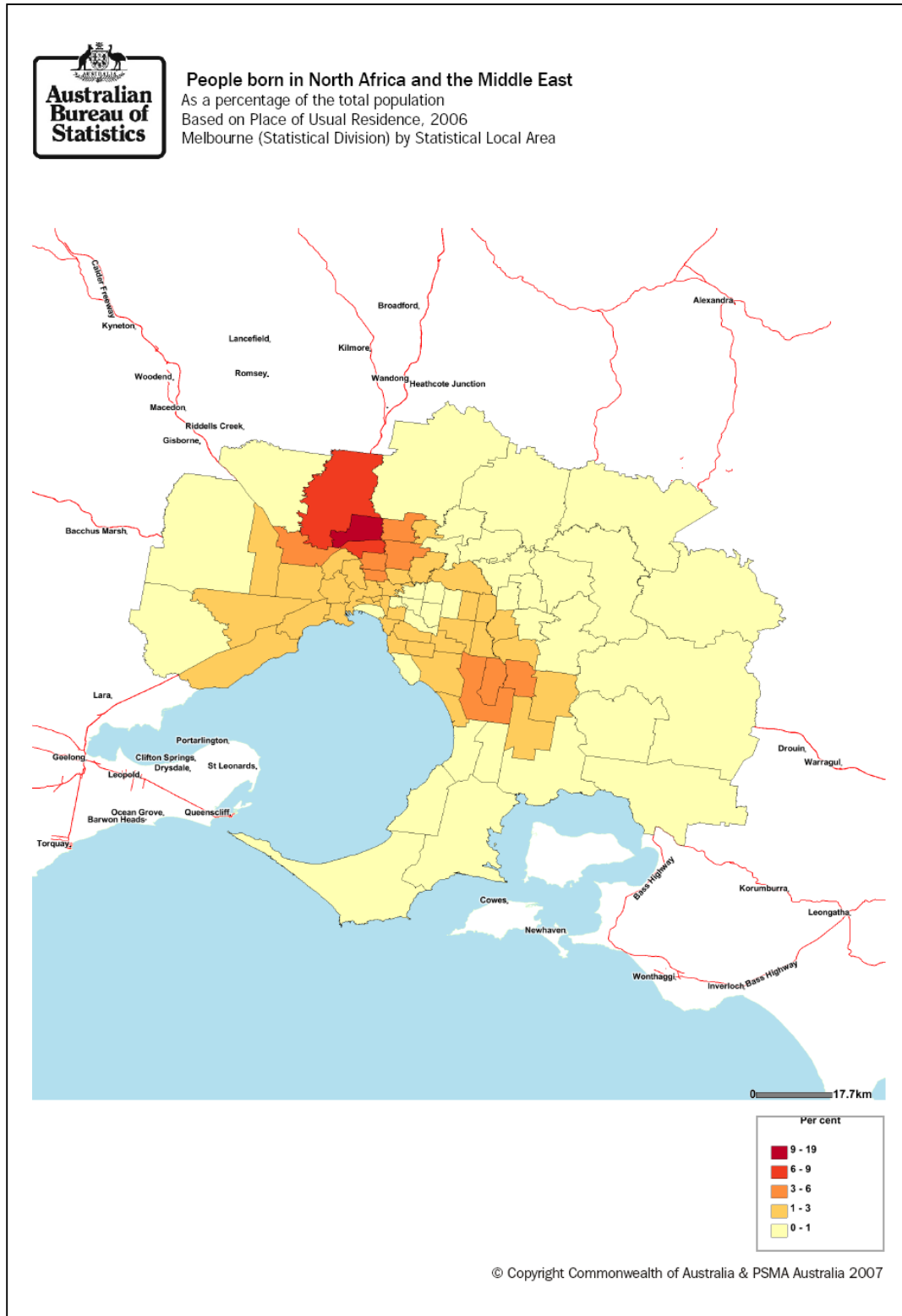


People born in South-East Asia
 As a percentage of the total population
 Based on Place of Usual Residence, 2006
 Greater Dandenong (C) (Local Government Area) by Census Collection District

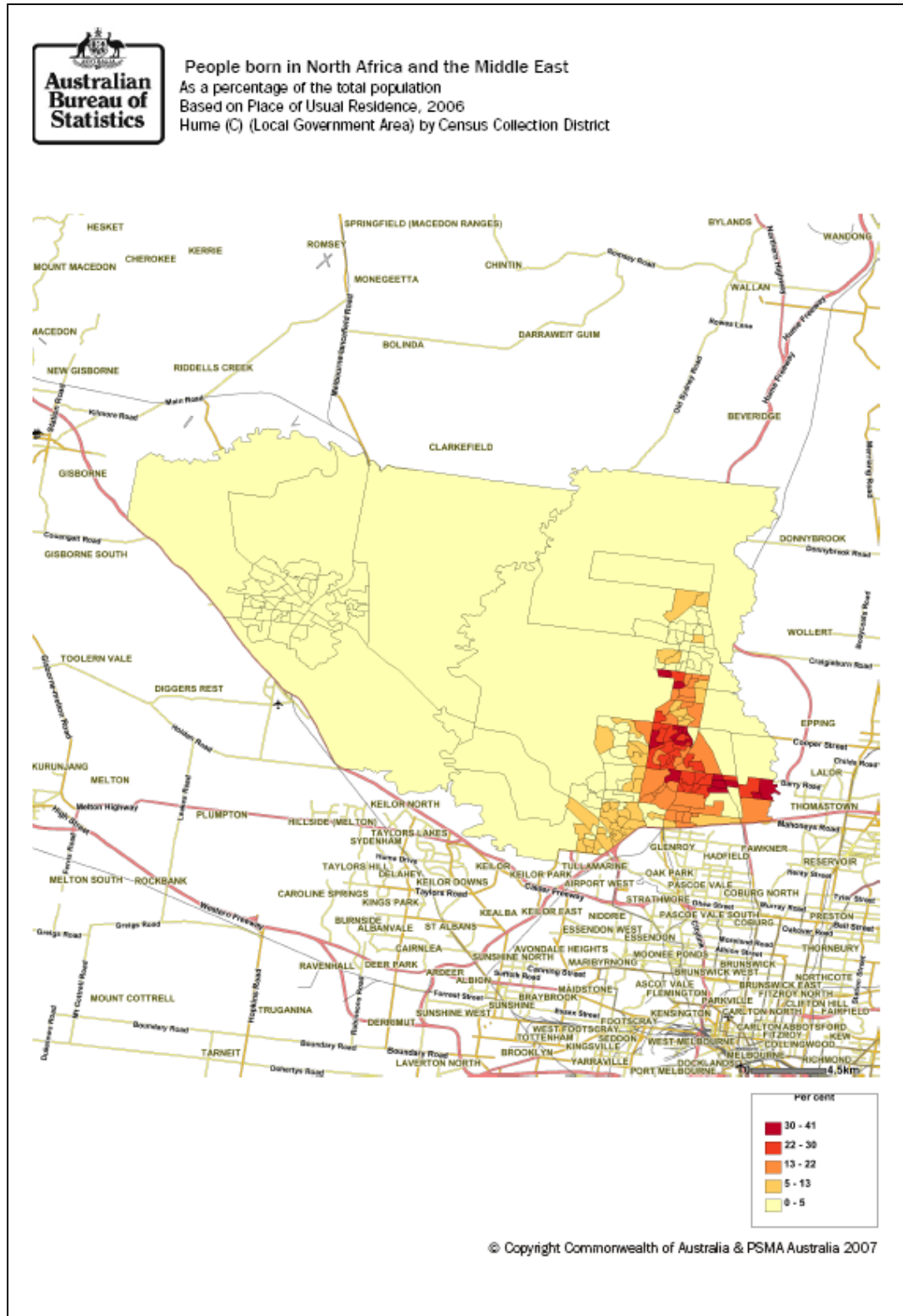


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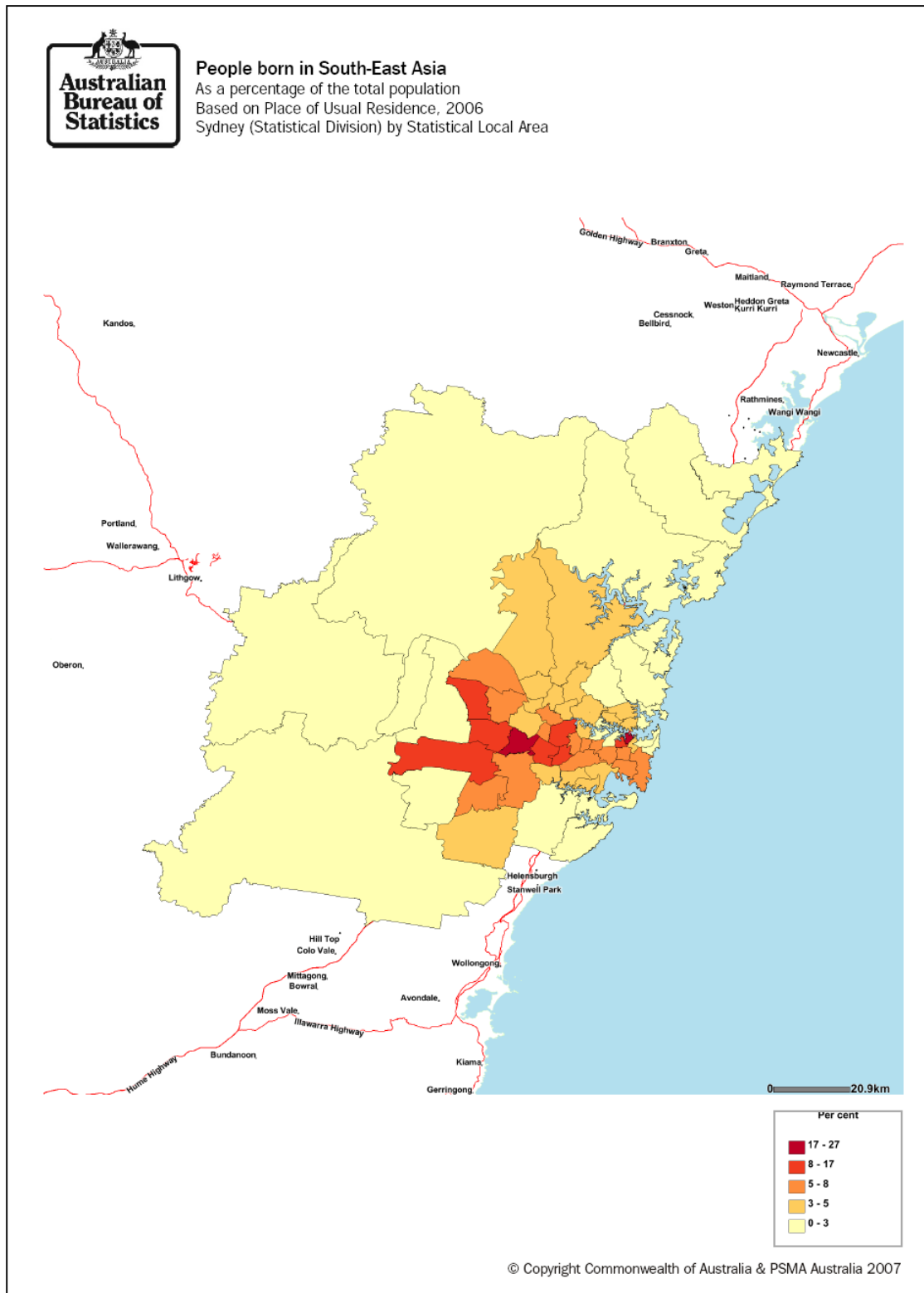
Map 4.13



Map 4.14



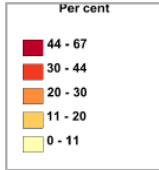
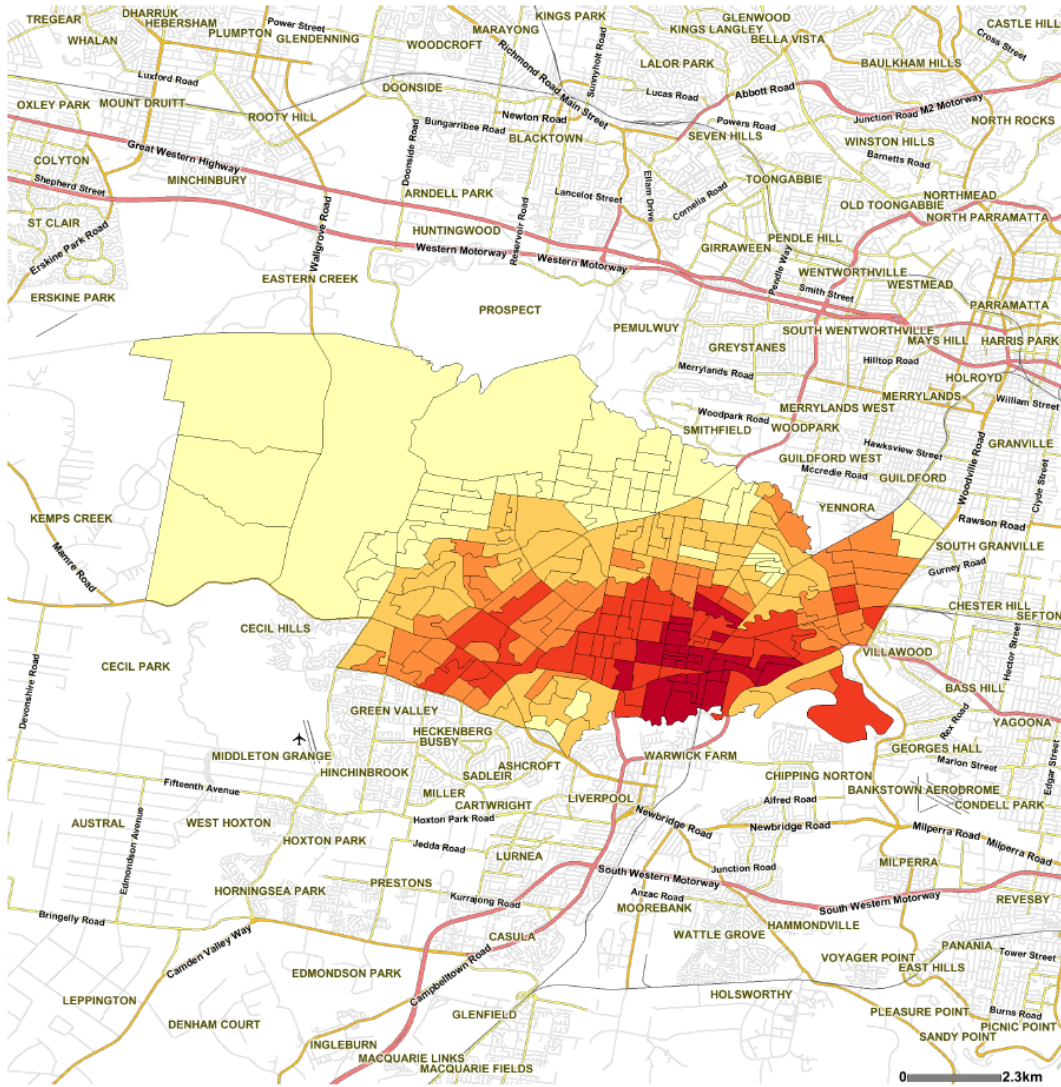
Map 4.15



Map 4.16

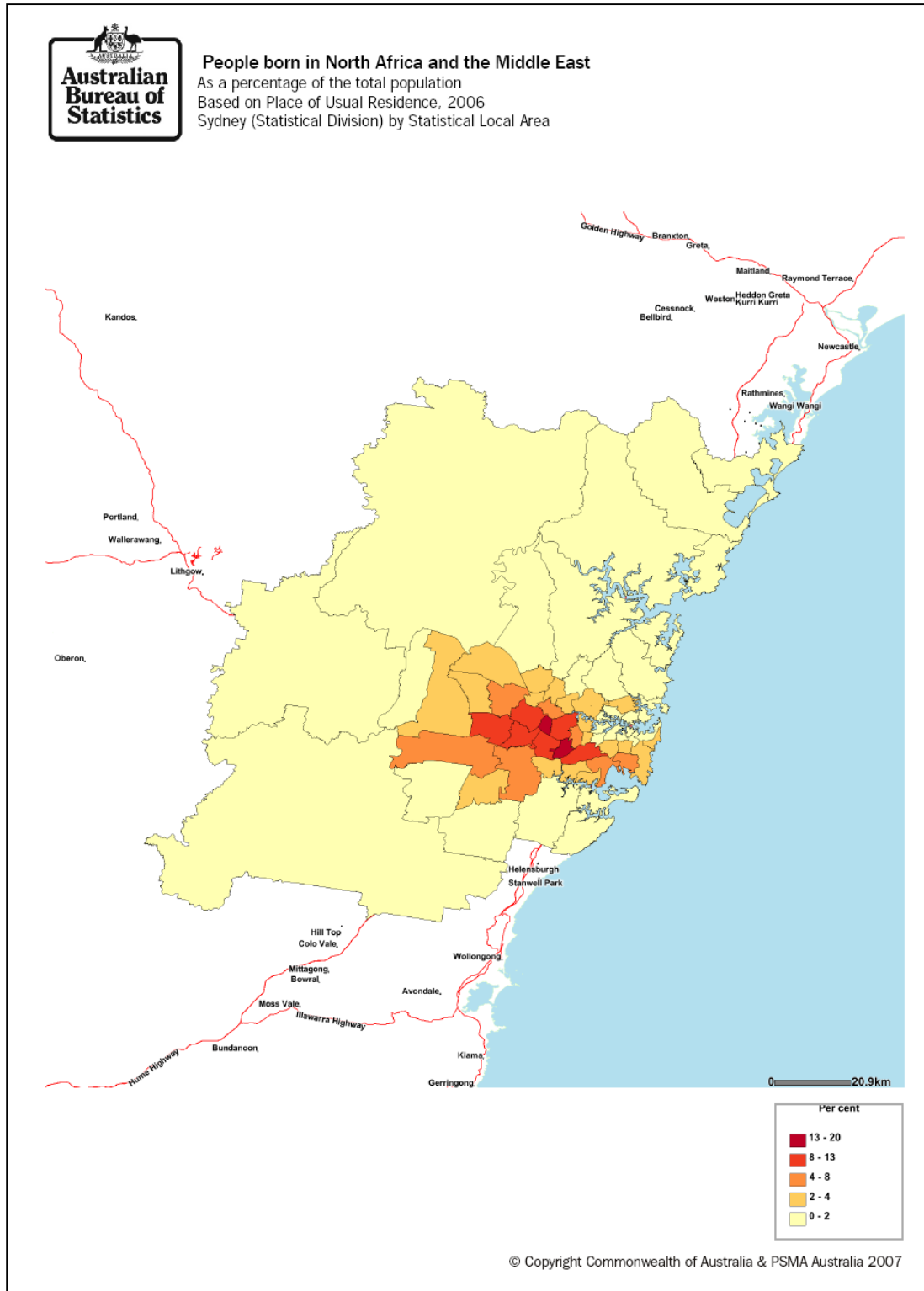


People born in South-East Asia
 As a percentage of the total population
 Based on Place of Usual Residence, 2006
 Fairfield (C) (Local Government Area) by Census Collection District



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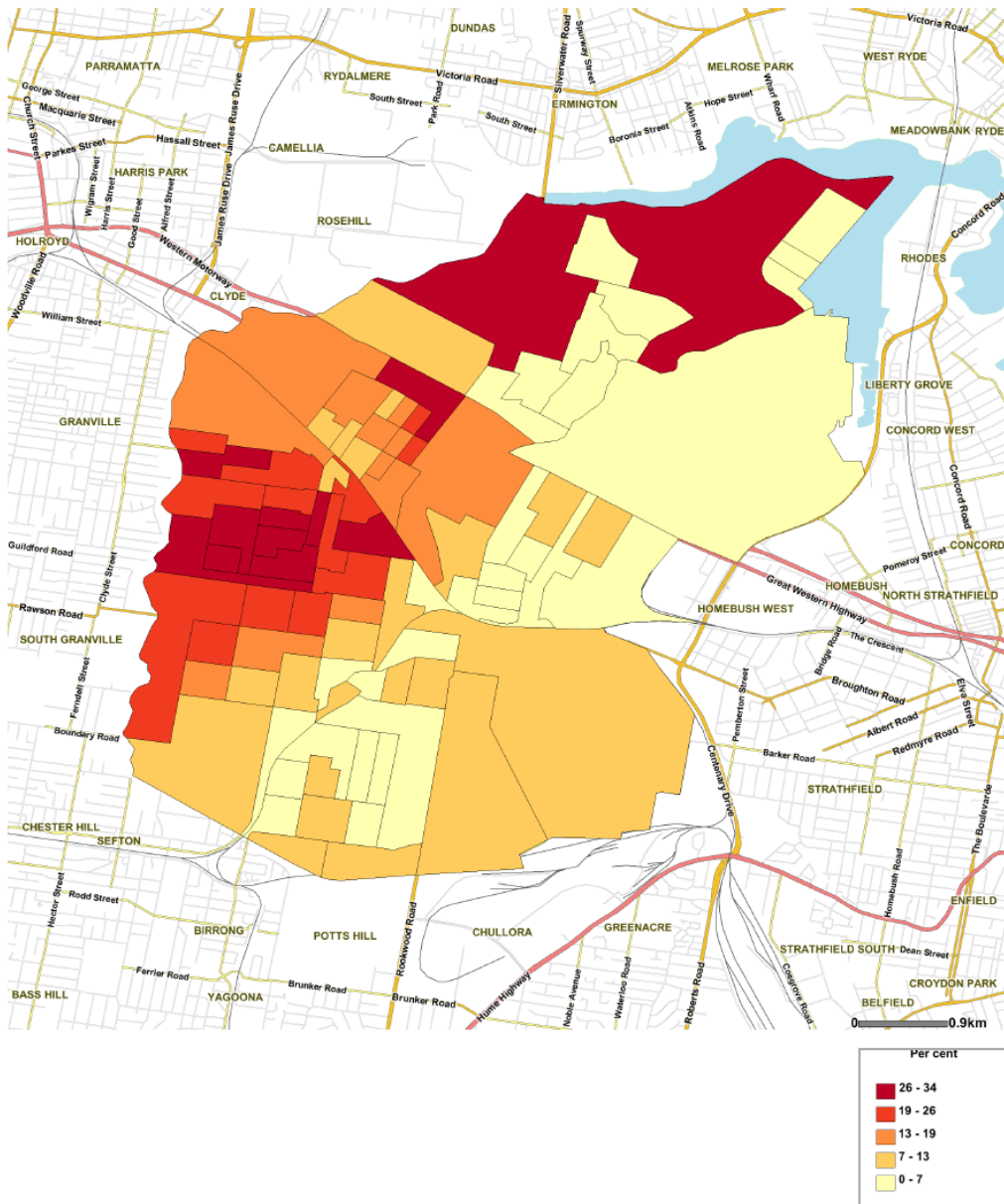
Map 4.17



Map 4.18



People born in North Africa and the Middle East
 As a percentage of the total population
 Based on Place of Usual Residence, 2006
 Auburn (A) (Local Government Area) by Census Collection District

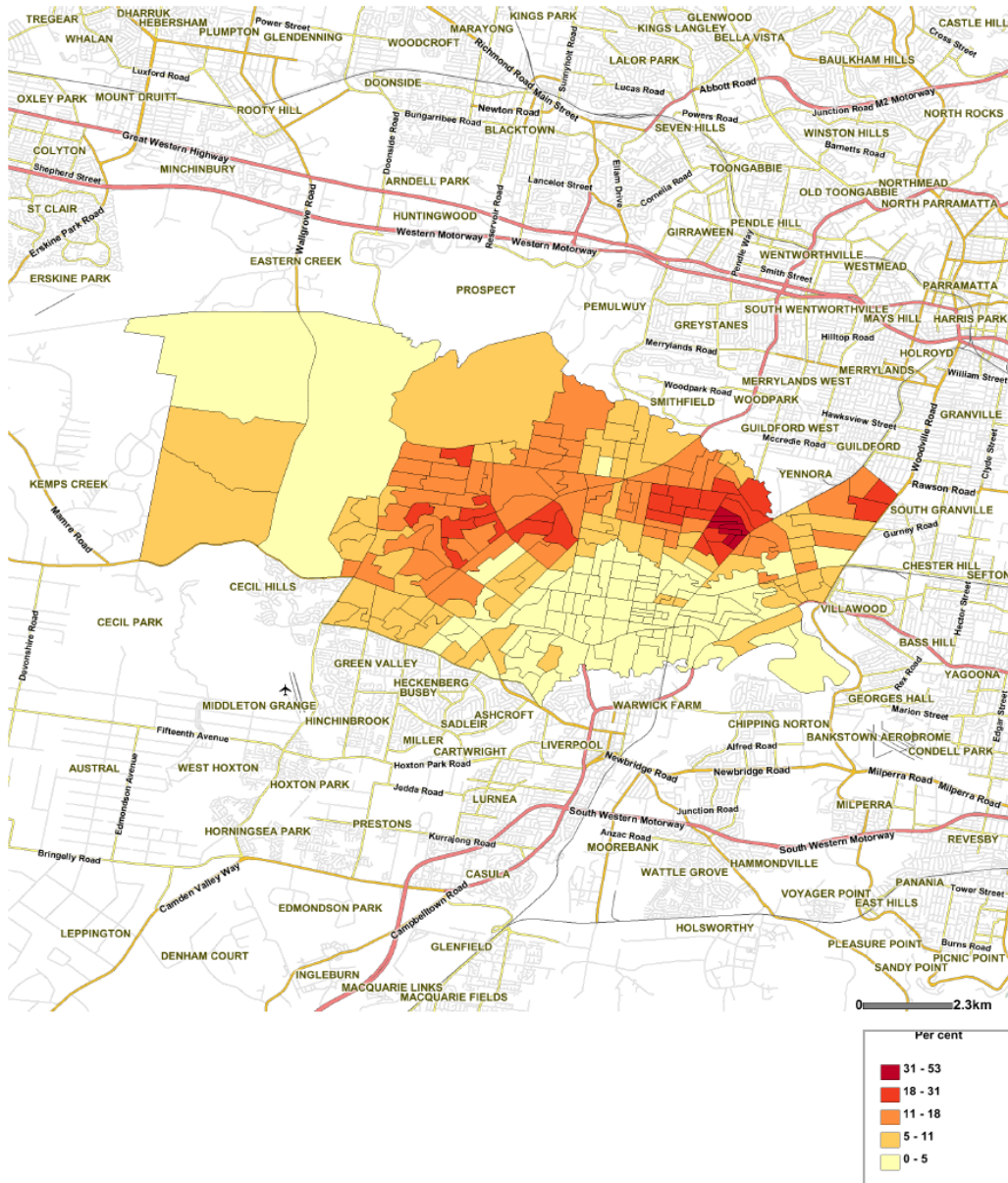


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Map 4.20



People born in North Africa and the Middle East
 As a percentage of the total population
 Based on Place of Usual Residence, 2006
 Fairfield (C) (Local Government Area) by Census Collection District



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Chapter Five

2007 – The national mood

As discussed in chapter three of the report, the survey was designed to explore five domains of social cohesion:

- belonging
- social justice and equity
- participation and community involvement
- acceptance and rejection
- sense of worth, life satisfaction

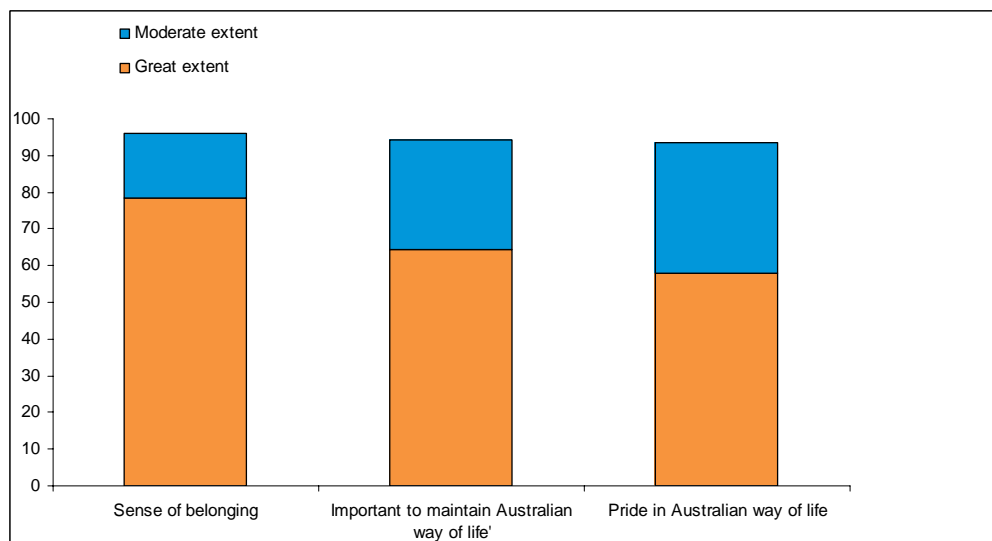
The reporting and analysis of the national survey findings is presented within this framework. The analysis presents the findings of the national benchmark survey, based on the sample of 2012 respondents.

Belonging

In the context of the discussion of types of questions and patterns of response, and the current socioeconomic environment, it was hypothesised that the survey would register evidence of high levels of identification with Australia. This expectation was met, as summarised in Figure 5.1:

- 78% responded that they had a sense of belonging to Australia to a 'great extent', an additional 18% to 'moderate' extent – a total of 96%; only 3% had a 'slight' or no feeling of belonging.
- 94% took pride in the Australian way of life and culture, 58% to a 'great extent' and 36% to a 'moderate extent'.
- Less than 4% disagreed with the statement that 'in the modern world, maintaining the Australian way of life and culture is important'.

Figure 5.1: Indicators of belonging



As discussed, trust is an issue that divides opinion. The national benchmark survey found that 55% of the sample agreed that ‘most people can be trusted’ while 41% were of the view that ‘you can’t be too careful in dealing with people’; 40% were of the view that the government in Canberra can be trusted to do what is right for the Australian people ‘almost always’ or ‘most of the time’, 46% ‘only some of the time’, while 13% had almost no trust in government.

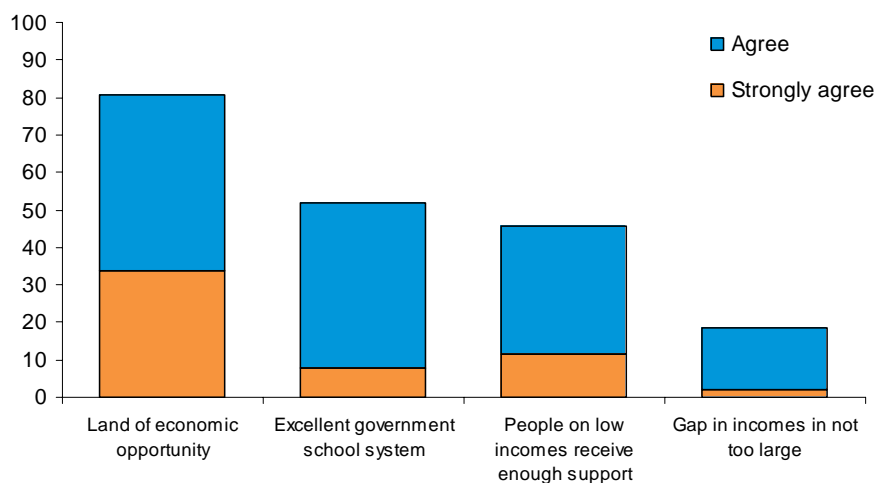
Social justice and equity

In keeping with the very strong sense of belonging, a large majority saw Australia as ‘a land of economic opportunity where in the long run hard work brings a better life’; one-third of respondents (34%) strongly agreed with this view and almost half (47%) agreed – a total of 80% in agreement; 16% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

In contrast, with regard to the politicised issues of social justice and equity there was a divided or majority view critical of existing policy:

- A large minority (36%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that ‘Australia has an excellent government school system’.
- Opinion was almost evenly divided (45: 46%) on whether government financial support to those on low incomes was adequate.
- A large majority (77%) agreed or strongly agreed that ‘the gap between those with high incomes and those with low incomes is too large’ (Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2: Economic opportunity and social justice



Note: The results for the income question have been transposed, respondents were asked to respond to the statement ‘In Australia today, the gap between those with high incomes and those with low incomes is too large’ – 76.9% of respondents were in agreement, 16.5% disagreed and 2.1% strongly disagreed.

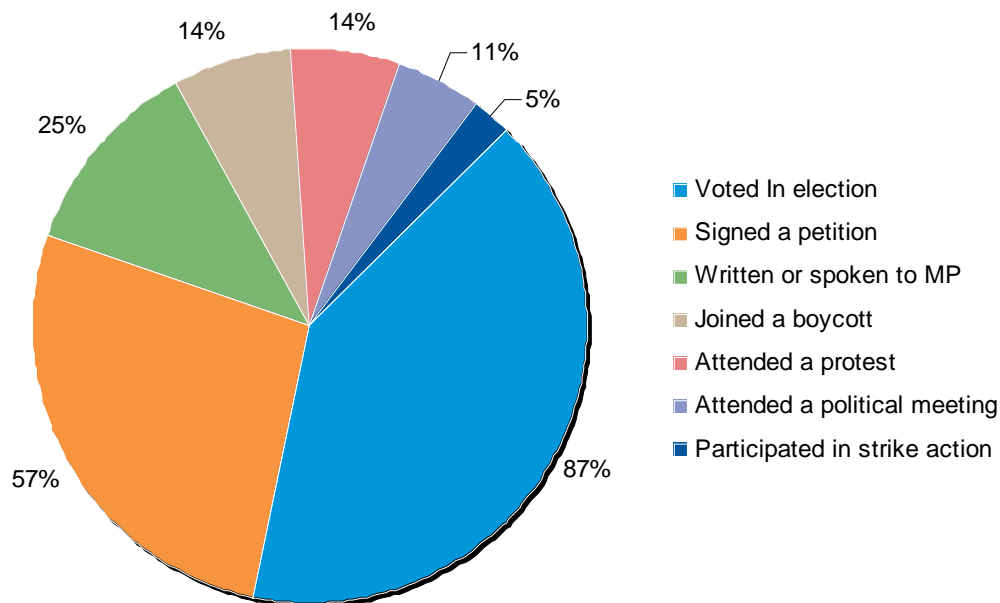
Participation and community involvement

A substantial minority of Australians are involved in voluntary work or the political process, contacting members of parliament and engaging in boycotts, meetings and industrial protest.

Almost one in three Australians (30%) undertake voluntary work, most of them on a regular basis – over 60% of this number, or almost 20% of the population, have involvement at least once per week; over 85%, or 26% of the population, have involvement at least once per month. The major forms of activity are the provision of personal care (17.5% of those involved in voluntary work), fundraising and sales (16.2%), administrative and clerical (14.3%) and teaching and instruction (11.9%).

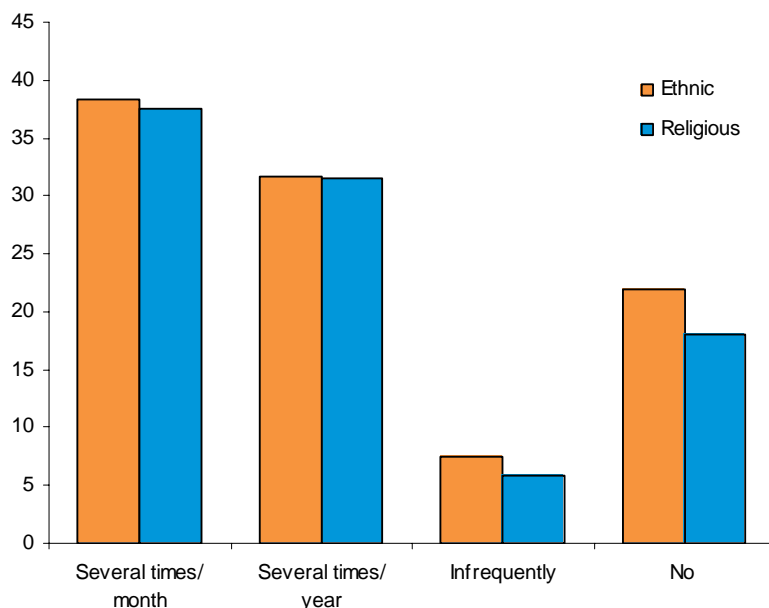
Some 92% of the national sample were Australian citizens and of these, 94% had voted in an election over the previous three years. Of all respondents, 87% had voted in an election over the previous three years, 57% had signed a petition and 25% had written or spoken to a member of parliament. A smaller minority had a more active involvement – 14% had participated in a boycott, a similar proportion attended a protest and 11% attended a political meeting; less than 5% had participated in a strike (Figure 5.3).

Figure 5.3: Political involvement (multiple response)



With regard to personal contacts, 22–26% of respondents stated that they had no contact with people who were of a different nationality or ethnicity to themselves. A slightly lower proportion (18–21%) said they had no contact with people of a different religion or faith (Figure 5.4). Contact was defined in terms of a visit to people outside one’s immediate family, or their visit to the respondent. On the other hand, 31–38% of respondents stated that they met on a regular basis (at least several times a month) with people of a different nationality or ethnicity and a similar proportion met with people of a different faith or religion.

Figure 5.4: Crossing ethnic/ religious boundaries



Source: 2007 National survey – (a) ‘Do you ever visit people of other nationalities or ethnic backgrounds?’; (b) ‘Do you ever visit people of other religious backgrounds?’

Acceptance and rejection

Slightly more than one-quarter of respondents (26%) report having experienced discrimination over the course of their lives as a consequence of their national or ethnic background; a lower proportion (8%) report discrimination on the basis of their religion. Almost one in 10 Australians (9%) report discrimination on grounds of national or ethnic background or religious belief over the last 12 months; of these, the majority (two out of three, or 6% of the total population) report experience of discrimination on a regular basis, at least once per month.

Discrimination is most commonly reported in the context of school (12%), on the street (11%) and when seeking employment or in the place of work (11%). Almost one in five (18%) report instances of verbal abuse, a slightly smaller proportion (14%) had encounters in which they were made to feel that they did not belong. Some 2% reported that they had been physically attacked, a similar proportion that their property had been damaged.

With specific reference to the acceptance of immigrants, 69% agreed that 'accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger' (24% strongly in agreement, 45% in agreement); 25% disagreed, of whom 8% registered strong disagreement.

When the political issue of immigration policy was considered, a substantial minority (35%) were of the view that the intake of immigrants was too high; 13% considered the intake to be too low and the most common response, 42%, was that the program was 'about right'.

When respondents were asked if the balance of immigration from different countries was about right, 35% considered the balance to be wrong (strongly correlated with their view on the size of the immigration intake), 48% that it was right; 5% indicated that they did not think of the immigration program in terms of countries of origin and 12% had no view or did not answer.

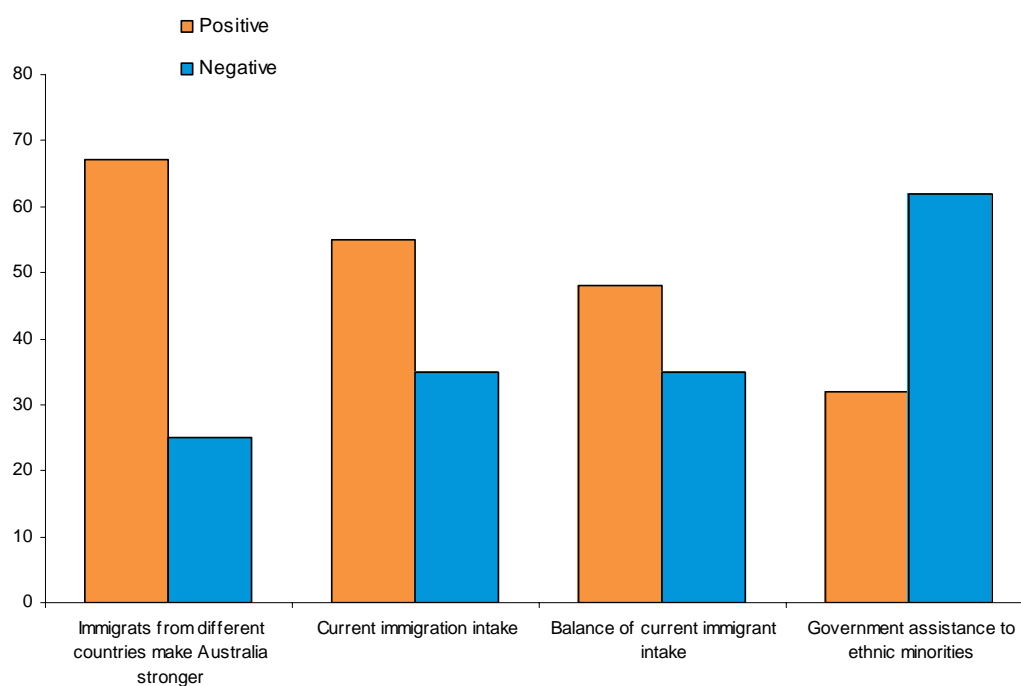
Those who stated that the balance was wrong were asked (in an open question) from which country, if any, there should be more immigrants, and from which there should be less. Over 7% stated that there should be more immigrants from Western Europe, 4.6% from Eastern Europe, 2.7% from Africa and 1.9% from Asia. Of those who nominated specific countries, 5.8% favoured more immigration from the United Kingdom, 1.9% from the United States and 1.6% from Italy.

When considering from which countries there should be a reduction of immigrants, almost one in 10 respondents (9.8%) stated that there should be no immigration from any country – that immigration should cease. With regard to specific regions or countries, 7.5% stated that there should be fewer immigrants from the Middle East, 7.3% from Asia, 3.4% from Muslim countries, 2.4% from Africa. When countries were specified, 2.4% indicated fewer immigrants from China, 2.3% from Lebanon, 2.1% from Iraq, 1.9% from India, 1.6% from Iran and 1.5% from Vietnam.

Combining these responses, the strongest support was for increased immigration from Europe and the United Kingdom (55% of those who wanted the balance changed, 19% of total respondents), the strongest opposition to the level of immigration from the Middle East and Muslim countries (50%, or 17% of the sample), and to the level of immigration from Asia (37%, or 13% of the sample).

While a majority (55%) supported immigration at current or higher levels and endorsed the value of a diverse immigration intake, as predicted by the discussion of types of question and pattern of response there was only minority support for government assistance to ethnic minorities to maintain their customs and traditions. While 32% supported such assistance, 62% were in opposition, of whom 25% registered strong disagreement. This finding points to concern with issues of integration; an additional question relating to involvement by immigrants in the politics of their former home country elicited a similar distribution of opinion – 29% approved such involvement while 65% were opposed (34% strongly opposed) (Figure 5.5).

Figure 5.5 Attitudes towards immigration and settlement policy



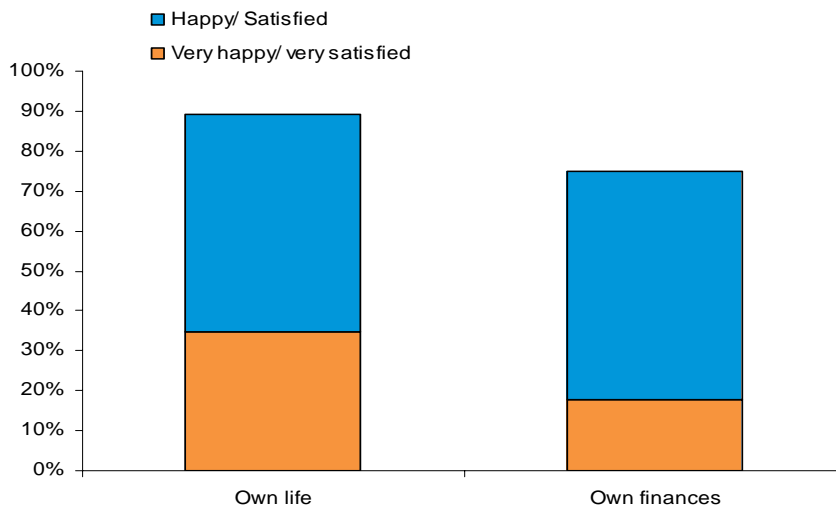
The survey findings point to a significant minority – in the 25–35% range – opposed to the current immigration level and the balance of nationalities within the intake. This minority questioned the value of a diverse immigration program; a clear majority expressed opposition to government assistance to ethnic minorities to maintain customs and traditions and were opposed to the involvement of immigrants in the politics of their home countries.

Sense of worth, life satisfaction

Questions relating to sense of worth and satisfaction were expected to register highly positive attitudes and expectations were met:

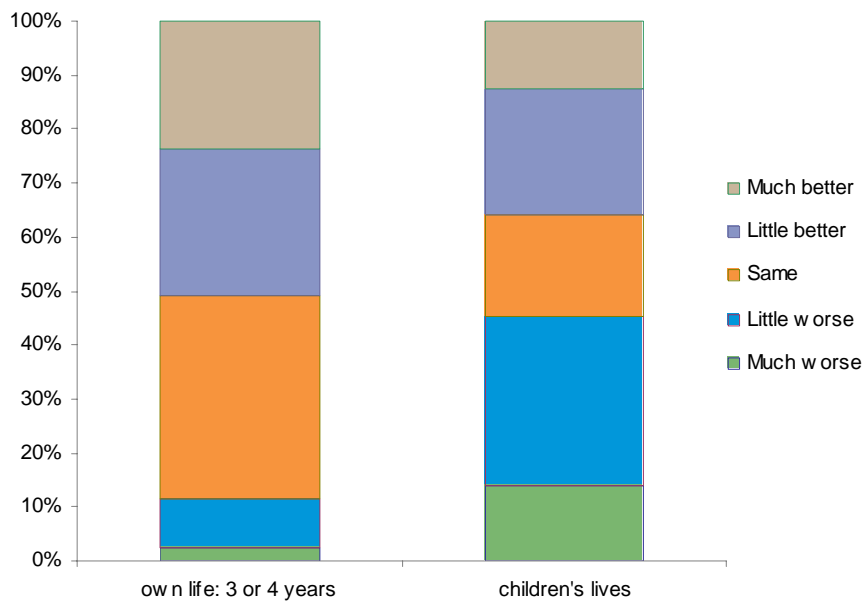
- 18% were very satisfied with their present financial situation and 57% were satisfied, a total of three out of four Australians indicating satisfaction.
- When respondents were asked to 'take all things into consideration' concerning their lives over the last year, 35% indicated that they were very happy and 54% that they were happy, a total of 89%. (Figure 5.6)
- Almost a quarter of Australians (22%) were dissatisfied with their financial situation, a much smaller proportion (8%) registered unhappiness when they take 'all things into consideration'. When considering the next three to four years, 9% expect that their lives will be a little worse, 2% much worse; 49% expect improvement.

Figure 5.6: Life happiness and financial satisfaction



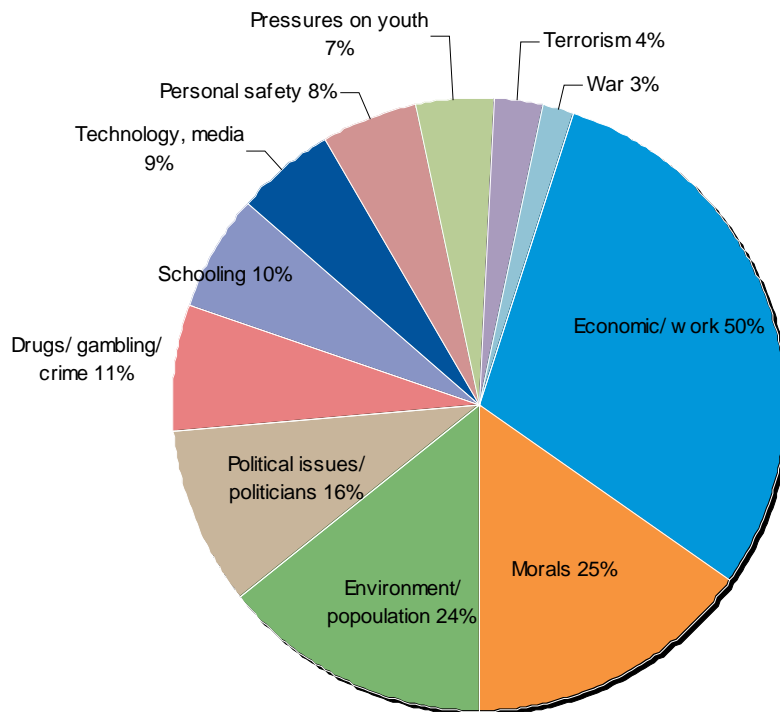
Views of the prospects for today's children are less positive – a significant finding (Figure 5.7); 43% consider that their children's lives will be worse than their own, 18% expect circumstances to remain as they are now and 34% expect some level of improvement.

Figure 5.7: Own future / children's future



Those who expressed pessimism concerning the lives of their children were asked for their reasons, with the option of specifying more than one factor in response to an open ended question ('why do you say that?'). A broad range of factors were specified (Figure 5.8). When responses are grouped the most common reference (50%) was to the cost of living and housing, extremes of wealth and poverty, the prospect of unemployment and poor working conditions; 25% specified low moral standards, moral issues and materialistic lifestyle; 24% environmental and population problems, pollution and climate change; 16% political issues and politicians; 11% drugs, gambling and crime; 10% schooling; 5-10% of respondents made reference to technology and the media, personal safety, pressures on youth. 4% mentioned terrorism, 3% the prospect of war.

Figure 5.8: Issues facing today's children (multiple response)



Chapter Six

Benchmarking the national mood

The key to interpretation of survey findings is the context of results – without context it is as if we were asked to find our way around an unfamiliar city without a map. Findings of earlier surveys provide a map for interpreting results, affording the means to locate trends.

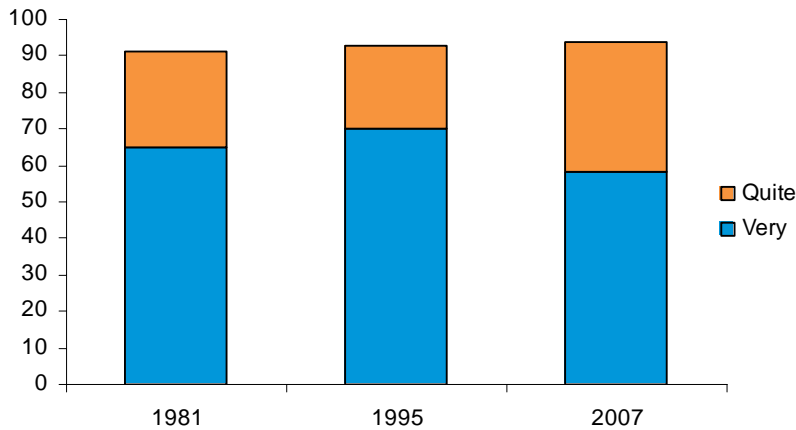
Consideration of the national survey in the context of earlier studies indicates that most of the 2007 findings are within the expected range. There is, however, increased support for some government programs and more positive attitudes are revealed by some life satisfaction indicators.

Change is most evident in response to the type of questions that typically indicate divided opinion. Thus there has been an increase in the level of support for the immigration program, more evidence of trust in institutions and fellow Australians, and a marked increase in support for government assistance to ethnic minorities for maintenance of customs and traditions. As is to be expected, given the improved employment and economic environment, satisfaction with personal finances has increased.

Category 1 – high positive response

A large measure of consistency is indicated when pride is considered, although there has been a decrease (from 70% to 58% – Figure 6.1) in the category indicating the highest level.

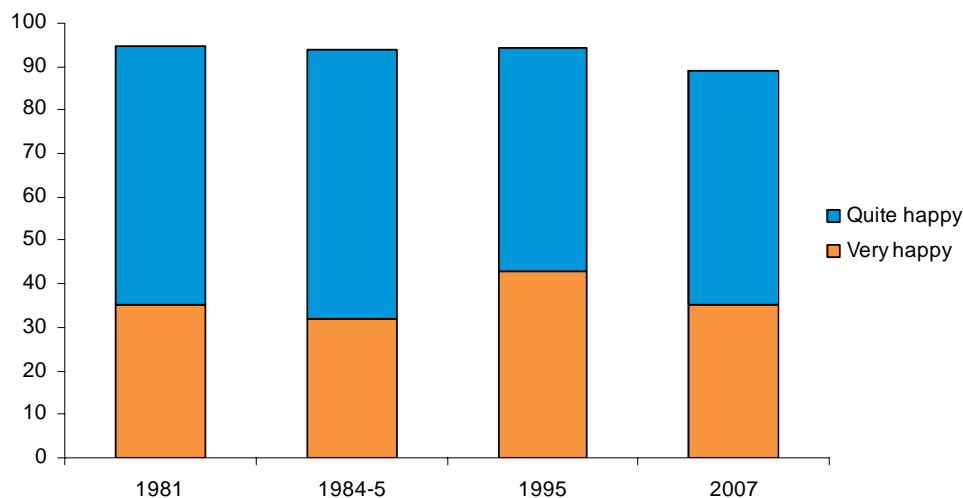
Figure 6.1: Pride in Australian nationality, way of life and culture



Sources: World Values Surveys; 2007 national survey.

A large measure of consistency is indicated when respondents are asked about their level of happiness (Figure 6.2), although (as with the indicator of national pride) there has been a decrease (from 43% to 35%) in the category indicating the highest level of happiness. The combined measure has declined marginally, from 94% to 89%.

Figure 6.2: Feeling of happiness

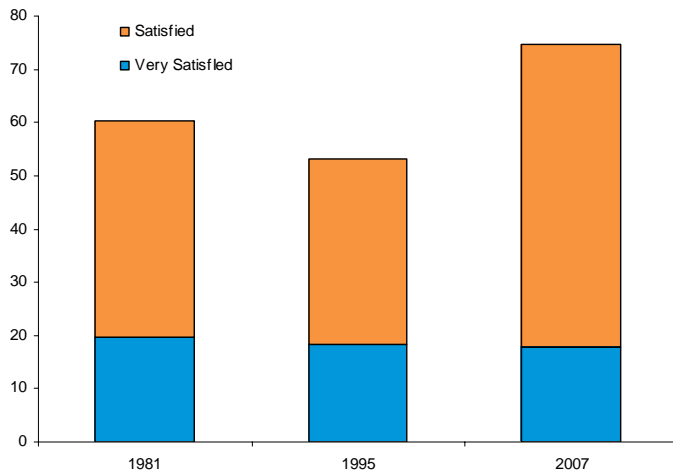


Sources: World Values Surveys; Kelley & Bean 1988: 164; 2007 national survey.

There was a slight difference in the question and scale used to measure response to questions of financial satisfaction (the 1981 and 1995 World Values Surveys were concerned with financial situation of the household and used a 10-point scale, the 2007 survey question reflected the respondent's financial situation and used a five-point scale). Bearing in mind these qualifications, a large measure of consistency is indicated when the strongest level of financial satisfaction is considered (19.6% in 1981, 18.3% in 1995 and 17.7% in 2007 – Figure 6.3).

There has, however, been marked variation in the second category, those indicating that they were satisfied (registering 7 or 8 on a 10-point scale) – 40.6% in 1981, 34.8% in 1995 and 57.1% in 2007. This shift is consistent with Australia's economic performance, with a significant increase in employment levels and financial security since 1995, and with the findings of other surveys – for example, the Westpac-Melbourne Institute of Consumer Sentiment registered July 2007 close to a high point in consumer sentiment, some 20% above the long-run average.

Figure 6.3: Financial satisfaction

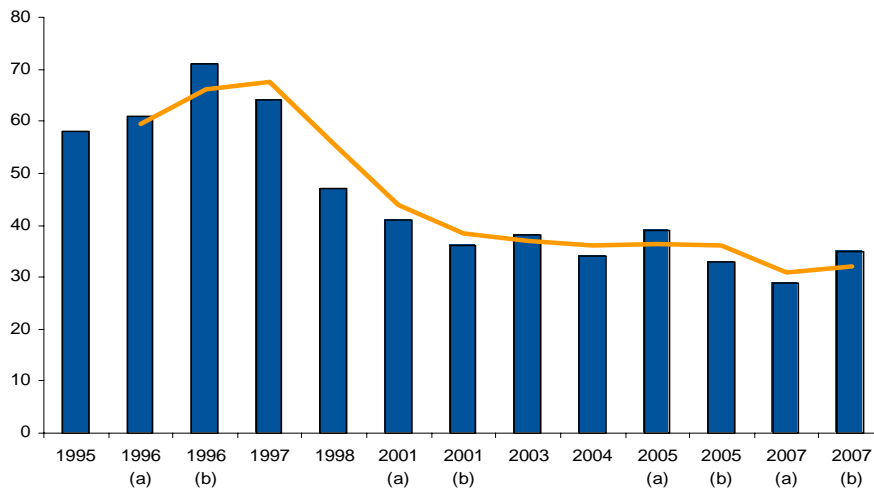


Sources: World Values Surveys; 2007 national survey.

Category 2 – politicised issues, divided opinions

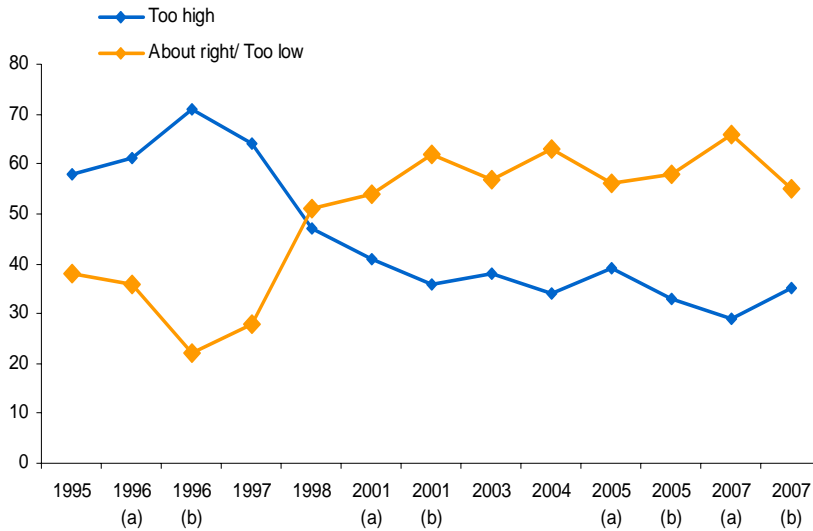
Public opinion polls have tested attitudes to the immigration program on a regular basis for more than 50 years. Whereas in the more difficult economic circumstances in the mid-1990s a large majority were of the view that the intake was too high, surveys indicate a significant shift since that time, such that this critical view has been held since 1998 by a minority (in the range 29% to 41% – Figure 6.4). The magnitude and consistency of the shift since 1998 is evident in Figure 6.5.

Figure 6.4: Immigration intake – too high (with two year moving average)



Source: See Table 6.1.

Figure 6.5: Immigration intake – too high, about right / too low



Source: See Table 6.1.

The finding of the 2007 national survey that 35% of respondents considered the intake to be too high places this result in the middle position for surveys of the last six years; one feature of the survey is the relatively high number in the Don't Know/Refused category, although the result is very close to the finding of the two surveys conducted in 2005. (Table 6.1)

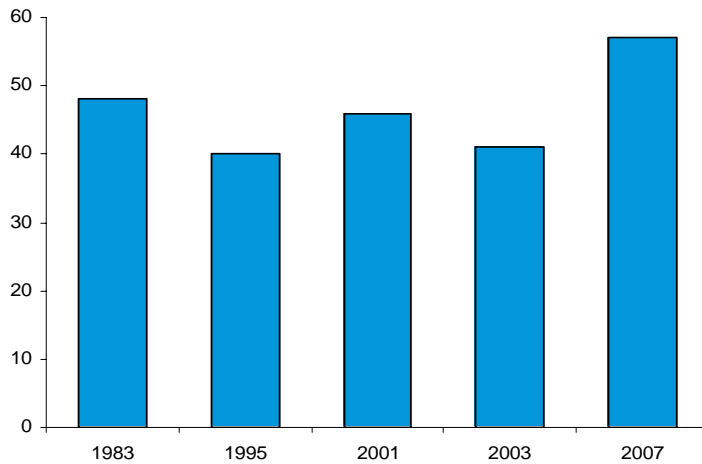
Table 6.1: Attitudes to current immigration intake (%)

	About right/Increase	Too high	Don't know/Refused	Total
1995	38	58	4	100
1996 (a)	36	61	1	100
1996 (b)	22	71	7	100
1997	28	64	8	100
1998	51	47	2	100
2001(a)	54	41	6	100
2001(b)	62	36	2	100
2003	57	38	5	100
2004	63	34	3	100
2005 (a)	56	39	6	100
2005 (b)	58	33	9	100
2007 (a)	66	29	5	100
2007 (b) – survey	55	35	10	100

Sources: Betts 2002: 25; Goot & Watson 2005: 184; Age, 20 December 2005; Australia Deliberates 2007: 92; 2007 national survey.

A question relating to trust has been posed in identical terms in five surveys; respondents are given the options that most people 'can be trusted', that one 'can't be too careful', or that it is not possible to answer. The 2007 survey, for the only time in this series and with a marked change since 2003, indicated majority endorsement of the proposition that most can be trusted. (Figure 6.6)

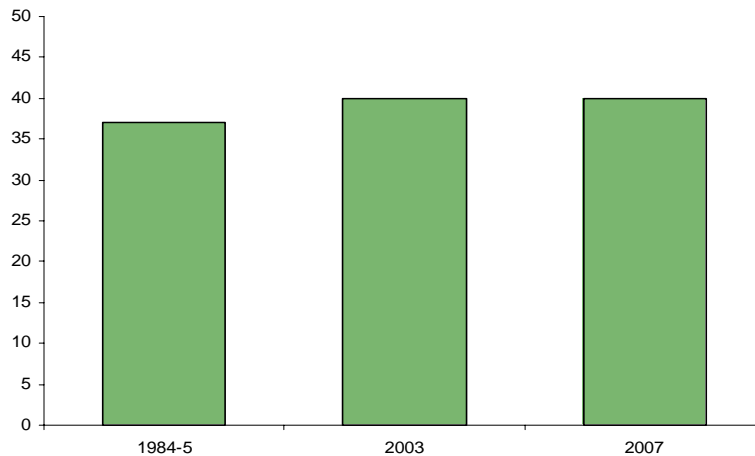
Figure 6.6: Trust: most people can be trusted



Source: World Values Survey; Bean 2005: 125; 2007 national survey.

In marked contrast, when respondents were asked concerning their trust in the federal government there was no indication of a significant shift since 2003 and the majority remain critical (Figure 6.7). While there was a minor difference in wording between the surveys, there is a large measure of consistency in the finding that only a minority of the population have confidence that the federal government will 'almost always' or 'mostly' 'do what is right for the Australian people'.

Figure 6.7: Trust in federal government

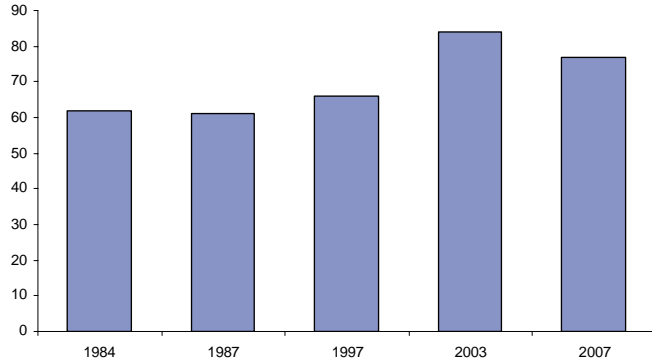


Sources: Kelley & Bean 1984-5: 55; Bean 2005: 128; 2007 national survey.

Category 3 – minority issues

As noted, attitudinal surveys reveal the lowest level of support for policies that are seen to advantage minorities and the 2007 survey is consistent with this pattern. Thus almost 80% of respondents were of the view that the gap in incomes was too large (Figure 6.8), the second-highest reading in surveys since 1984, slightly down on the 2003 result (84% in 2003, 77% in 2007).

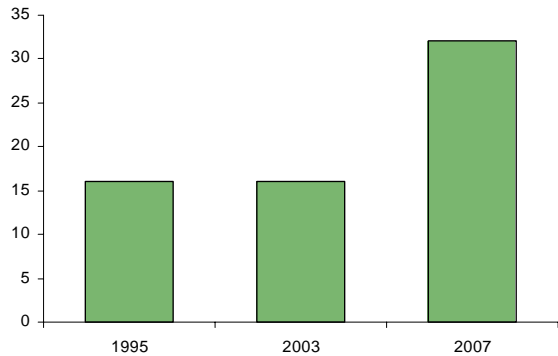
Figure 6.8: Gap in incomes – too large



Sources: Pusey & Turnbull 2005: 174; 2007 national survey.

Government assistance for cultural maintenance is opposed by a majority (62%), although in one of the more striking 2007 findings denoting a significant shift in opinion, support for government assistance to ethnic minorities for maintenance of customs and traditions has doubled from findings recorded in 1995 and 2003 (Figure 6.9). One possible explanation is a perception in the community that cuts in government funding to ethnic groups have gone too far.

Figure 6.9: Government assistance to ethnic minorities to maintain customs/traditions – agree



Sources: Goot & Watson 2005: 185; 2007 national survey.

Trend data is also available on the extent of voluntary activity. Surveys undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) indicate that involvement in voluntary work has increased from 24% of the population in 1995 to 32% in 2000 and 34% in 2006. The finding of the national survey that 30% engage in volunteer work is below the 2006 figure, but within range of the ABS survey (ABS 2007).

Chapter Seven

Variability at the national level

Analysis by key demographic variables at the national level requires taking into account the degree of overlap across variables – for example, level of education and qualification will in many cases also reflect age (lower levels of educational attainment for those aged 64+) and will impact on decisions and outcomes, including location of residence and income level. While this level of inter-relatedness requires attention in analysis of survey results, a significant variability within the Australian population is evident.

A statistical probability analysis was undertaken of responses to two of the survey questions: attitudes to the current immigration intake and responses to the proposition that ‘accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger’. The results are presented as odds ratios.¹

The results in Table 7.1 show that men were 31% less likely than women to consider the number of migrants coming into Australia to be too high. Similarly, those living in capital cities were less likely than those living in the rest of the country (by about 19%) to report that the number was too high. In terms of age, those aged over 54 were about 45% more likely to say the number of migrants was too high than were those aged under 35. Those aged between 35 and 54 years were very similar in their opinion to those aged under 35.

Those with a university degree were 35% less likely to report that the intake of immigrants was too high (compared with those with secondary school qualification or less), people with a trade qualification were about 61% more likely to report that the number was too high. In terms of country of birth, those born in Australia, irrespective of whether one or both parents were Australia-born, were more likely to respond that the intake of immigrants was too high. However, the results were statistically significant only for those Australia-born with both parents born in Australia.

The following groups were more likely to say that the intake of immigrants was too high: those with trade qualification (by 61%), those with both parents born in Australia (by 55%) and those aged over 54 years (by 45%).

The estimated effects of covariates on the likelihood of disagreeing (disagree, disagree strongly) with the proposition that ‘accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger’ are given in the second panel of Table 7.1.

¹ An odds ratio greater than 1 indicates that a given group (say females) is more likely to report too high compared with the reference group (say males) for the variable gender. Similarly a value of less than 1 indicates that a given group is less likely to report too high compared with the reference group. A value of 1 indicates that a given group and the reference group are equally likely to report too high.

The effects of gender and educational qualifications are similar in direction and magnitude to what was observed above for opinions on the intake of immigrants. The effect of age is now stronger: those aged over 54 years are about 67% more likely than those aged under 35 to disagree with the statement that migrants make Australia stronger.

The strongest effect on the likelihood of disagreeing with the proposition came from those Australia-born respondents with at least one Australia-born parent. Those with one parent born in Australia were almost twice as likely to disagree with the statement that migrants make Australia stronger than those who were born in a non-English-speaking country. Similarly, those with both parents born in Australia were almost 80% more likely to disagree with the statement. Those born in Australia with both parents born overseas were similar in their opinion to those born overseas (whether in an English-speaking or non-English-speaking country).

Thus the groups that are more likely to disagree with the proposition are, in order of magnitude: those Australia-born with at least one parent born in Australia, those aged over 54 (by 67%), and those with trade qualifications (51%).

Note in the following table R=reference group; ** significant at $p<0.05$; * significant at $p<0.10$; the magnitude of the Z-values can be inferred as indicating the strength of the significance.

Table 7.1: Logistic regression estimates in odds ratio

Covariates	Estimated effects (odds ratio)	Z-value
1. Agree with the view that the 'number of immigrants accepted into Australia at present' is too high' (1=yes, 0=no)		
Gender		
Female ^R	1.00	-
Male	0.69	3.72**
Residence		
Capital city	0.81	2.07**
Rest of state ^R	1.00	
Age		
Aged less than 35 ^R	1.00	
35–54	1.16	1.11
55+	1.45	2.73**
Education		
Year 12 or less ^R	1.00	
Trade/diploma	1.61	6.56**
University	0.65	6.01**
Country of birth		
Born overseas (NESB) ^R	1.00	
Born overseas (ESB)	0.90	0.49
Australia-born:		
Both parents Aus.-born	1.55	2.64**
One parent Aus.-born	1.40	1.59
Neither parent Aus.-born	1.44	1.53
2. Disagree that 'accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger' (1=yes, 0=no)		
Gender		
Female ^R	1.00	
Male	0.73	2.85**
Residence		
Capital city	0.82	1.81*
Rest of state ^R	1.00	
Age		
Aged less than 35 ^R	1.00	
35–54	1.31	1.84*
55+	1.67	3.43**
Education		
Year 12 or less ^R	1.00	
Trade/diploma	1.51	5.09**
University	0.69	4.63**
Country of birth		
Born overseas (NESB) ^R	1.00	
Born overseas (ESB)	1.46	1.64
Australian born:		
Both parents Aus.-born	1.78	2.98**
One parent Aus.-born	1.97	2.88**
Neither parent Aus.-born	1.23	0.74

The operation of these variables is indicated in the following discussion at the descriptive level, by considering responses to specific questions. First, with regard to gender, one of the less significant variables, the key points of difference indicate that women are less likely than men to support current immigration and settlement policy, are less optimistic about the future, and are more likely to be involved in voluntary work.

Table 7.2: Gender, selected questions

Domain	Question	Male	Female	% variance
SJ	Australia is a land of economic opportunity – agree	83.2%	77.7%	6.6%
A	Immigrants from different countries make Australia stronger – agree	73.9%	63.3%	14.3%
W	Happiness over the last year – happy	90.4%	87.7%	3.0%
W	Life in three or four years – improved	53.6%	44.4%	17.2%
A	Number of immigrants – too high	31.9%	37.8%	(18.5%)
W	Present financial situation – satisfied	74.1%	75.7%	(2.2%)
B	Pride in the Australian way of life – great, moderate, great + moderate	61.5% 32.0% 93.5%	54.7% 39.2% 93.9%	(0.4%)
B	Sense of belonging in Australia – great, moderate, great + moderate	76.7% 18.9% 95.6%	80.0% 16.6% 96.6%	(1.0%)
A	Most people can be trusted	56.6%	54.1%	4.4%
A	Government assistance to ethnic minorities – agree	33.3%	31.0%	6.9%
P	Undertake voluntary work	26.7%	32.7%	(22.5%)
A	Experienced discrimination last year	9.9%	7.4%	25.3%
	TOTAL N	973	1026	

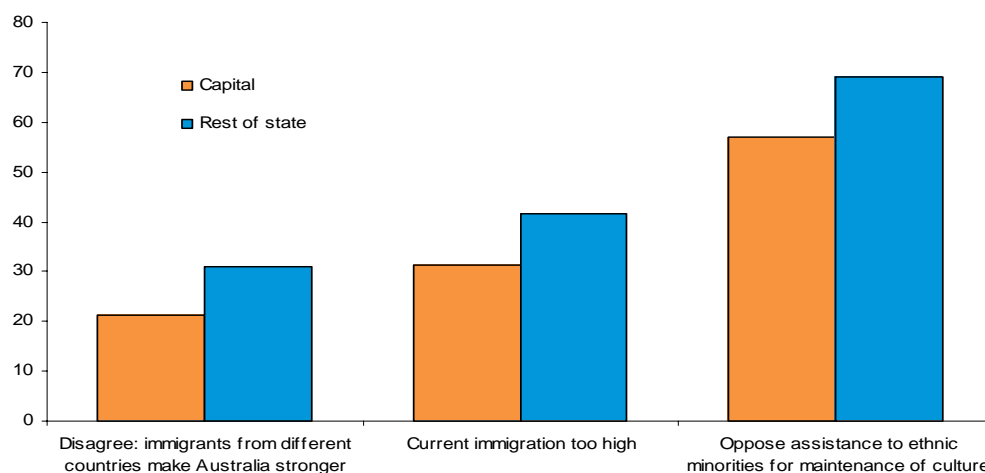
There is some indication of differentiation in attitudes between residents of the five most populous states on immigration issues and experience of discrimination. A higher proportion of South Australian respondents agree that immigration from different countries makes Australia stronger, that assistance should be given to ethnic minorities for maintenance of customs and traditions, that the immigration intake is about right or too low and report the lowest level of discrimination on the basis of ethnicity or religion (Table 7.3). New South Wales has the highest proportion (40%) who consider the immigration intake to be too high. Western Australia and Queensland have the highest proportion (around 30%) who disagree with the view that immigration from different countries makes Australia stronger. While differences are within a narrow range and the majority endorses current immigration policy and the value of a diverse program, there is a significant consistency of response which differentiates South Australia and Victoria from the other three states.

Table 7.3: Attitude to immigration issues and experience of discrimination

	South Australia	Victoria	New South Wales	Queensland	Western Australia
Agree that accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger	77.3%	70.3%	67.3%	65.5%	65.7%
Agree that ethnic minorities should be given government assistance to maintain their customs and traditions	34.8%	34.1%	31.3%	31.4%	27.6%
Agree that the immigration intake is about right or too low	70.3%	58.1%	51.7%	50.5%	56.9%
Report discrimination on the basis of national, ethnic or religious background in the last 12 months	5.8%	6.4%	8.8%	10.9%	12.3%
N=	155	502	660	388	195

As the regression analysis indicates, there is a minor difference in the attitudes of residents in capital cities and the rest of the state. Thus those living outside the capital cities have a marginally higher sense of pride and belonging in Australia. In response to the question ‘To what extent do you take pride in Australia?’, 56% answered ‘to a great extent’ in the capitals and 61% in the rest of the state. There is a similar gap in the sense of belonging – 77% of those in the capitals answered ‘to a great extent’, 81% in the rest of the state. Those living outside the capitals are less convinced that immigration from different countries makes Australia stronger, are less supportive of the current immigration program (42% consider the intake to be too high, compared with 31% in the capitals), and are less supportive of government assistance to ethnic communities for maintenance of customs and traditions (Figure 7.1).

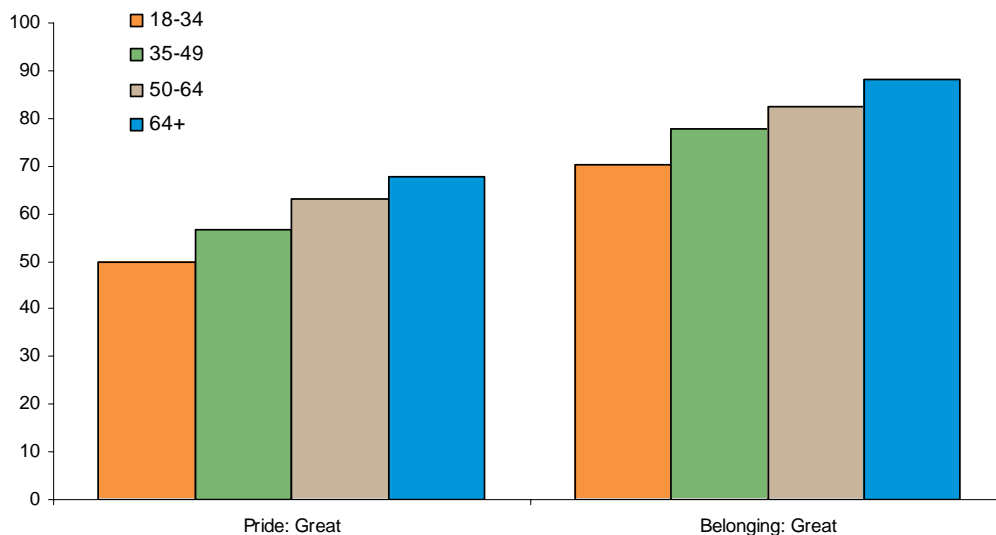
Figure 7.1: Immigration issues – negative response by region



This divergence between the capital and the rest of the state may be largely or entirely explained by factors other than place of residence. As indicated by the statistical analysis and further discussed below, age and level of educational qualification are key variables in differentiating response. Of the respondents to the national benchmark survey, 33.6% in capital cities were aged 18 to 35, 26.7% of respondents outside the capitals, with a correspondingly higher proportion aged 50 to 64. One-third (33.1%) of respondents in the capitals had a bachelor degree or higher, 18.2% of respondents outside the capitals.

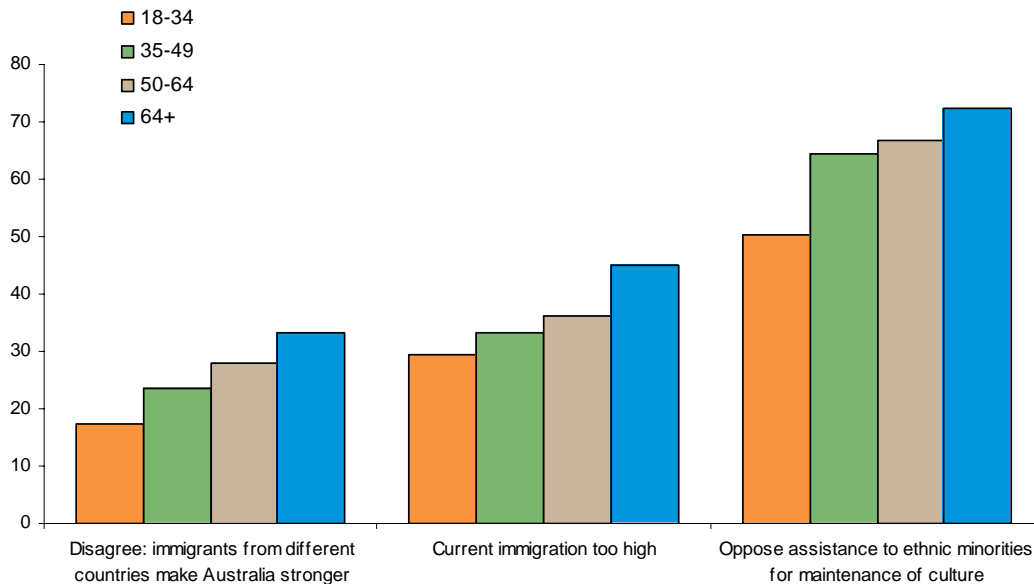
Analysis of response by age group indicates that the younger age group has a lower sense of national pride and belonging (Figure 7.2) and higher levels of support for a range of issues related to immigration. Thus 70% of those aged 18–34 have a sense of belonging to ‘a great extent’, 82% of those aged 50–64 and 88% of those aged 65 and above. The view that Australia is a land of economic opportunity is most strongly supported by those aged 65 and above – 41% in this category strongly agree, compared with 27% of those aged 18–34.

Figure 7.2: Sense of national pride and belonging by age group – strongest level of identification



With regard to immigration issues, 45% of those aged 65 and above consider that the current immigration intake is too high, compared with 29% aged 18–34. Of those aged 65 and above, 34% disagree that immigration from different countries makes Australia stronger, compared with 17.5% aged 18–34; 72% of those aged 65 and above disagree with government assistance to ethnic minorities, compared with 50% aged 18–34 (Figure 7.3).

Figure 7.3: Immigration issues – negative response by age group

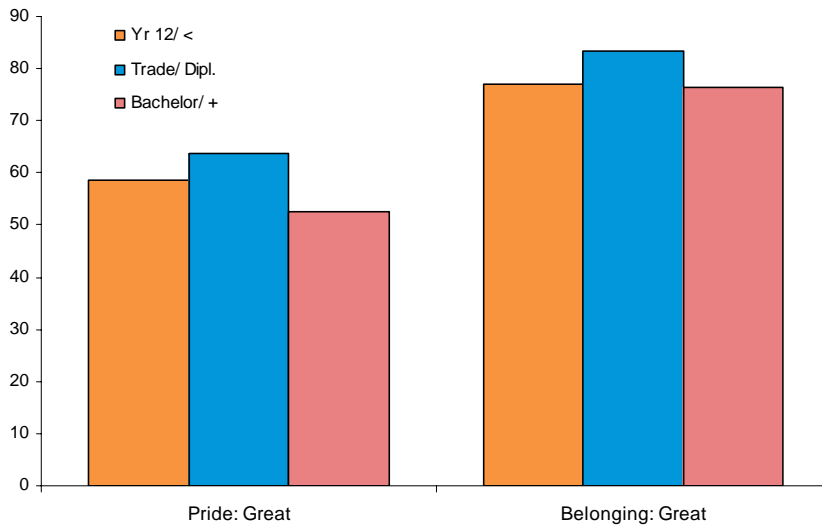


With regard to educational qualifications, three categories were chosen for analysis – those with completed education up to Year 12, with trade or diploma, and with bachelor degree or higher.

Variation is not evident across the full range of questions: for example, when asked concerning trust in government, there was uniformity across the educational categories – only a minority have trust, in the range 38.5–39.9%. Similarly, there was little variation in response to expectations of significant improvement in lives over the next three or four years – the responses were in the range 22.3–24.1%.

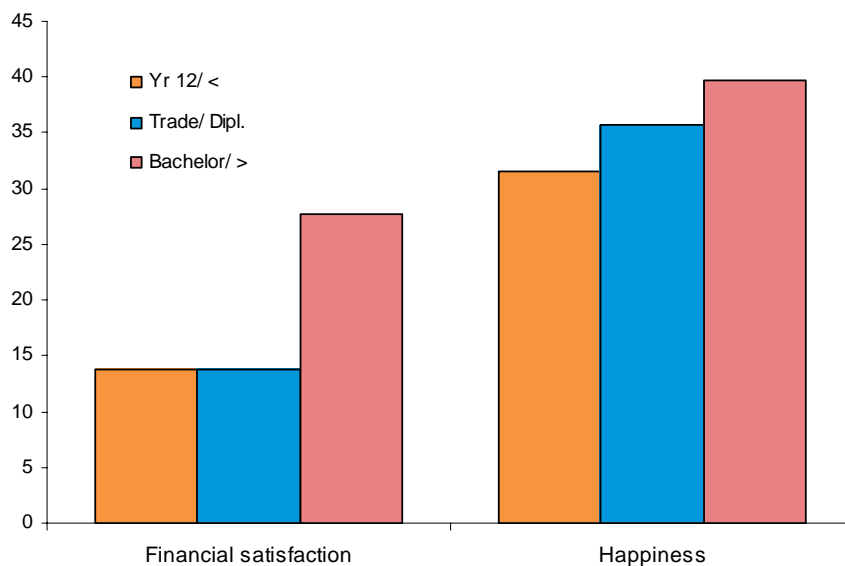
When asked about sense of belonging and national pride, those in the middle category, with trade or diploma qualifications, provided the strongest positive response – 83.5% with trade or diploma qualifications had a great sense of belonging, 77.1% with education up to Year 12 and 76.5% with bachelor level or higher. There was a more marked difference in response to sense of national pride – 63.6% with trade or diploma qualifications had a great sense of national pride, 58.6% of those at the school level and 52.4% with bachelor degree or higher (Figure 7.4).

Figure 7.4: Sense of national pride and belonging by educational qualification – strongest level of identification



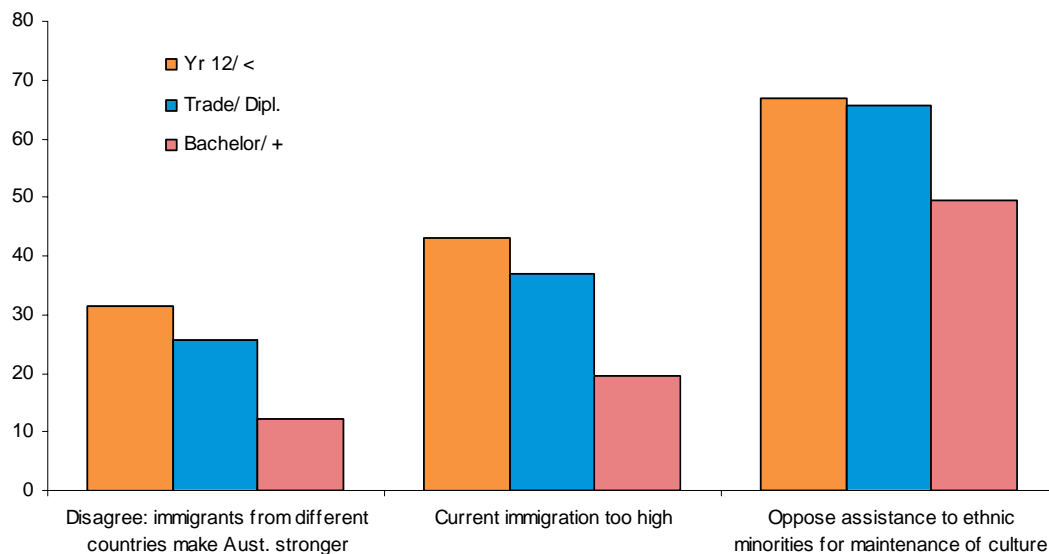
In response to questions relating to community involvement, financial satisfaction and happiness in life, the strongest positive responses ranked the three groups in order of educational qualification (Figure 7.5). Thus 36.6% of those with bachelor level or higher were involved in voluntary work, compared with 26% and 29% for the other two categories. Of those with bachelor degree or higher, 27.2% recorded the highest level of financial satisfaction, double the 13.8% for the other two categories; 39.7% with bachelor level or higher stated they were very happy, compared with 35.7% with trade or diploma qualifications and 31.5% with Year 12 or below.

Figure 7.5: Financial satisfaction and happiness by educational level – strongest positive response



This pattern was repeated in the context of questions relating to immigration issues: those with the highest level of qualification were most supportive of the value of immigration and policies of cultural maintenance, those with education to Year 12 the most negative (Figure 7.6). Of those with bachelor level or higher, 20.4% view the immigration intake as too high, almost half the proportion of the other groupings – 37% with trade or diploma qualifications consider the intake to be too high, 43.2% of those with Year 12 or lower. Of those with bachelor level or higher, 13.3% disagree that immigration from different countries has made Australia stronger, 26% with trade or diploma qualifications and 31.3% with Year 12 or lower disagree. Of those with bachelor level or higher, 51.1% disagree with government assistance to ethnic minorities for maintenance of culture and traditions, as do 65.6% with trade or diploma qualifications and 66.9% with Year 12 or lower.

Figure 7.6: Immigration issues: negative response by educational qualification



Chapter Eight

Birthplace groups

Of the national sample of 2012, 72.8% were born in Australia; of the overseas-born, the majority were born in English-speaking countries – the largest of the overseas birthplace groups were from the United Kingdom (10% of the total sample) and New Zealand (2.7%); 90.5% gave English as their first language; 9.5% gave a first language other than English, most of whom (four out of five) stated that they spoke English very well or well: 93% of the sample were Australian citizens.

Analysis of the national sample was undertaken by birthplace groups, a key variable for interpretation of results. Given the low proportion of NESB respondents in the national survey, statistically reliable analysis is only possible utilising three categories – those born in Australia, those born in English- and non-English-speaking countries. A broader range of birthplace groups is analysed in the discussion of local surveys.

Belonging

With regard to indices of belonging and identification, as to be expected the Australia-born had the strongest sense of belonging, gave the greatest consideration to maintaining the Australian way of life and culture, and the greatest sense of pride; on all three indicators, the English-speaking came next, followed by those of NESB (Figures 8.1 and 8.2). The very high level of identification of the NESB is, however, a significant finding: thus 93.2% of the NESB group had a sense of belonging in Australia to a great or moderate extent, 89.9% took pride in the Australian way of life and culture to a great or moderate extent, and 95.3% strongly agreed or agreed that maintaining the Australian way of life and culture was important.

Figure 8.1: Sense of belonging

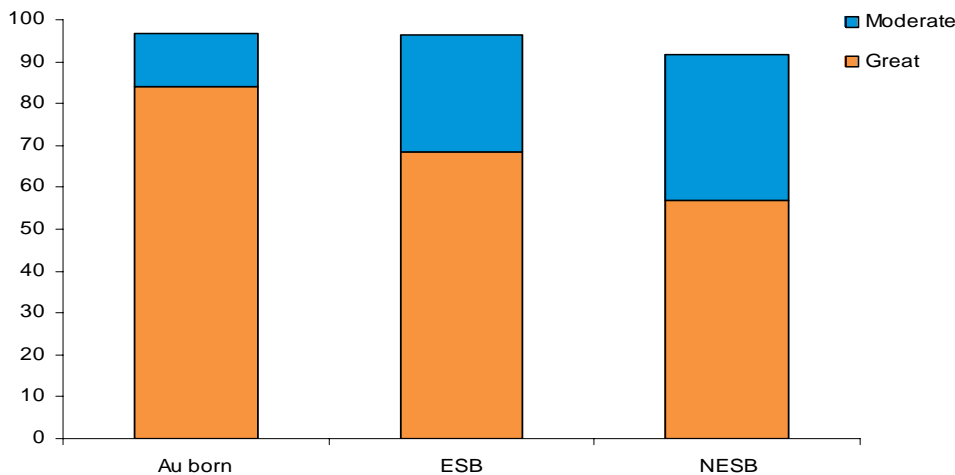
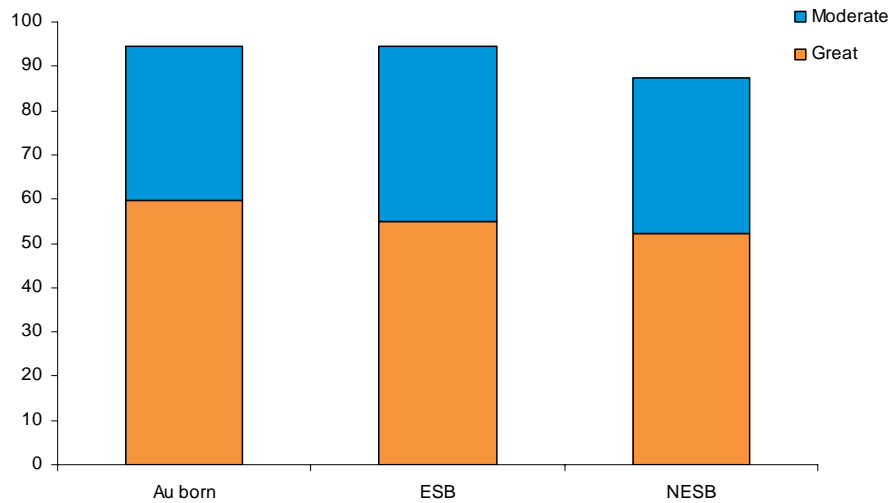
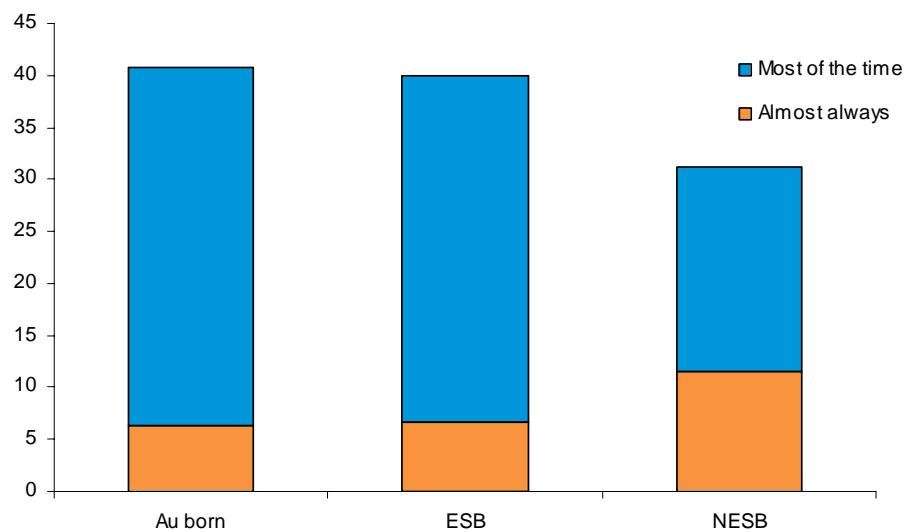


Figure 8.2: Sense of pride



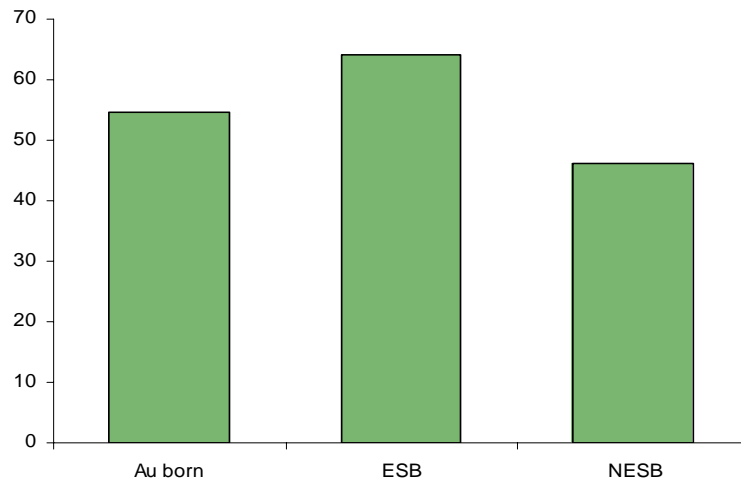
With regard to levels of trust, almost identical results were obtained when the federal government was considered by Australian and ESB groups – 6.4% of the Australia-born and 5.0% of the ESB agreed that the government can be trusted ‘almost always’, 34.3% and 34.0% that it could be trusted most of the time (Figure 8.3). Within the NESB group there was almost double the number who extend trust ‘almost always’ (12.2%), but a much lower proportion answering ‘most of the time’ (22.0%); combining ‘almost always’ and ‘most of the time’, the Australian and ESB groups’ level of trust was about 40%, the NESB group’s 34.2%.

Figure 8.3: Trust in government (Canberra)



With regard to level of trust in people, the ESB group was significantly more trusting at 69.7% than the Australia-born (54.7%) and the NESB (46.1%).

Figure 8.4: Trust in people – can be trusted



Social justice and equity

The second element of this survey measured social justice and equity issues. On these issues a relatively large degree of consistency was recorded across the birthplace groups:

- Between 5.0% and 11.1% 'strongly agreed' that Australia has an excellent government school system, between 40% and 45% 'agreed'.
- 11% of the Australia-born and 14.3% of ESB groups 'strongly agreed' that those on low incomes received enough financial support from the government, compared with 11.2% of the NESB; the level of 'agreement' was almost identical, in the range 32.4–34.7% (Figure 8.5).
- When the gap in incomes was considered, the Australia-born were most strongly of the view that the gap was too large (46.4%), followed by the ESB (38.3%) and the NESB (34.3%); when the 'strongly agree' and 'agree' categories were combined, the relatively critical view of the Australia-born is emphasised: 79.6% of the Australia-born, 71.6% of the ESB and 70.3% of the NESB view the gap in incomes as too large.
- When the view that Australia was a land of economic opportunity was considered, the strongest agreement was from the ESB (85%), followed by the Australia-born (79.9%) and the NESB (78.1%) (Figure 8.6).

Figure 8.5: Those on low incomes receive sufficient support

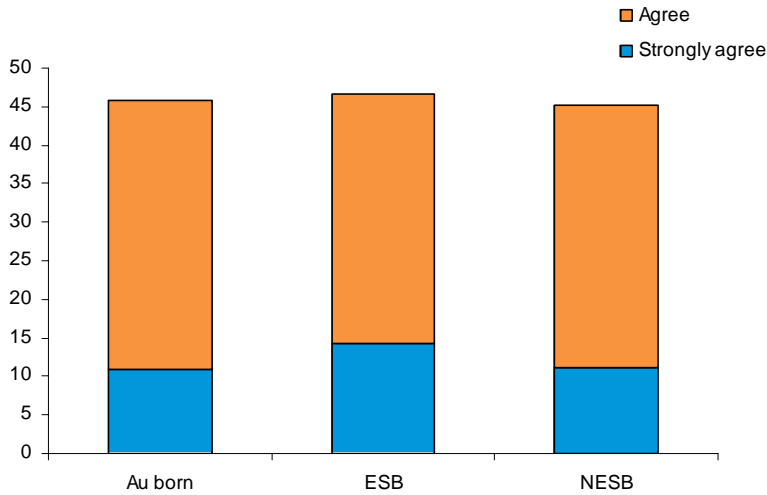
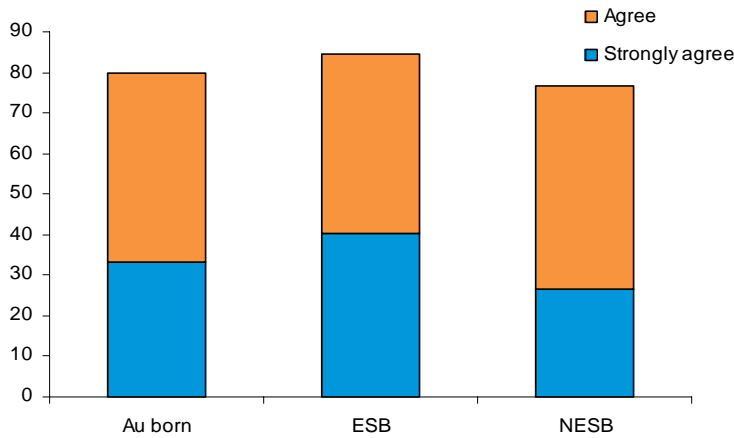


Figure 8.6: Australia is a land of economic opportunity



Participation and community involvement

With regard to participation and community involvement, some significant differences were registered: 32.9% of the Australia-born, 24.9% of the ESB and 19% of the NESB were involved in volunteer work. Among those involved, the frequency of voluntary work was reasonably constant, with about two-thirds involved at least once per week. This pattern parallels the findings of other studies, although the level of NESB involvement is relatively low; the National Survey of Australian Volunteers of Diverse Cultural and Linguistic Backgrounds, conducted between May 2004 and April 2005, found that 23% of volunteers came from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and played a vital role in the functioning of the voluntary organisation in which they were involved.

With regard to political involvement, the Australia-born had the highest level of involvement, as indicated in Table 8.1. The ESB approximated the Australia-born level on most indices, with the exception of voting, signing a petition and participation in a strike. The NESB recorded the lowest levels, with the exception of their attendance at a protest, which equalled the Australia-born.

Table 8.1: Political participation

	Australia-born	ESB	NESB
Voted in an election	93.3%	72.8%	61.7%
Signed a petition	64.0%	50.2%	31.6%
Contacted an MP	27.2%	26.4%	13.5%
Participated in a boycott	15.6%	14.9%	7.4%
Attended a protest	14.5%	11.9%	13.5%
Attended a political meeting	11.1%	10.0%	8.4%
Participated in a strike	5.3%	3.8%	2.7%
Total N	1427	261	297

Acceptance and rejection

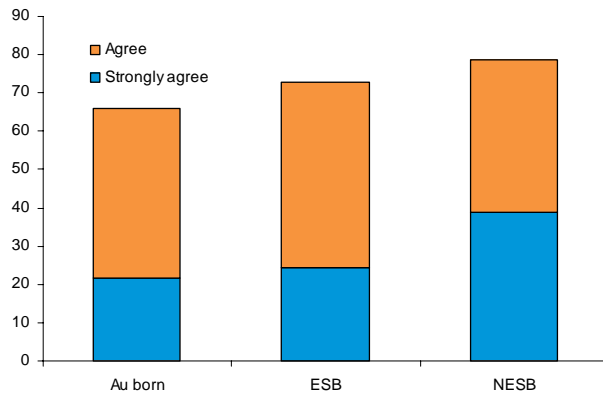
In the context of legitimacy and acceptance, about two out of 10 of Australia-born report having experienced discrimination over the course of their lives as a consequence of their national or ethnic background; the rate for the ESB is three out of 10 (31.8%) and NESB almost five out of 10 (46.5%). While discrimination on the basis of religion is within a narrower range (6.1–8.8%), the NESB report discrimination over the last 12 months at double the rate for the Australia-born.

Table 8.2: Experience of discrimination

	Au.-born	ESB	NESB
Have you ever experienced discrimination ... because of your national or ethnic background?	20.0%	31.8%	46.5%
Have you ever experienced discrimination ... because of your religious background?	7.6%	6.1%	8.8%
Have you experienced discrimination because of your national, ethnic or religious background in the last 12 months?	7.2%	8.4%	14.1%
Total N	1427	261	297

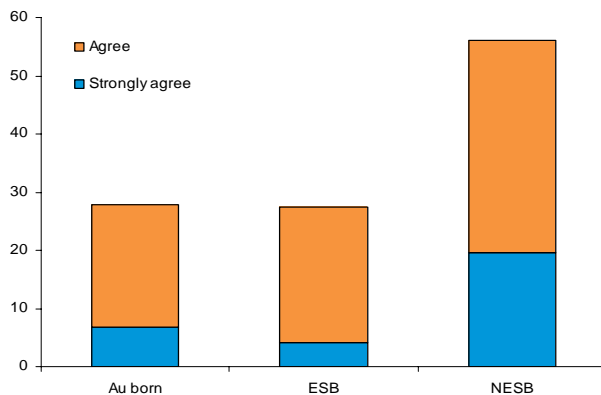
Attitudes to immigration issues again provide evidence of a high level of divergence, with the Australia-born and ESB responses markedly differing from the NESB. Thus in response to the question of whether immigration from different countries had made Australia stronger, 21.6% Australia-born, 24.3% ESB and 38.8% NESB were strongly in agreement (Figure 8.7).

Figure 8.7: Immigration from different countries makes Australia stronger



Of the Australia-born, 10.5% supported an increase in the immigration intake, as did 14.2% of ESB and 20.2% of NESB. On the question of whether the balance of the intake from different countries was about right, there was a large measure of agreement (47.5%, 48.7%, 50%). The largest divergence was in response to the question of government assistance to ethnic minorities for maintenance of customs and traditions: less than 7% Australian and ESB strongly agreed, compared with 20% NESB; when the strongly agree and agree responses are aggregated, 27.9% of Australian and 27.5% ESB were in agreement, 56.1% NESB (Figure 8.8).

Figure 8.8: Government assistance to ethnic minorities for maintenance of customs and traditions



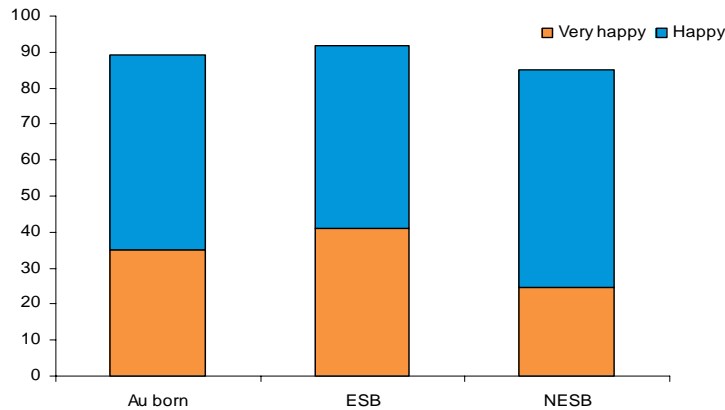
Sense of worth, life satisfaction

The fifth element of the survey considered sense of worth and satisfaction. Two patterns are evident: first, as in other elements of the survey, the responses of the Australia-born and ESB are differentiated from the NESB; second, while Australia-born and ESB express higher levels of satisfaction with their lives, the NESB have a stronger sense that their own lives and the lives of their children will improve.

In considering their own financial situation, there is a similar level of those who state that they are 'satisfied', in the range 56–60%, but a marked divergence of those who state that they are 'very

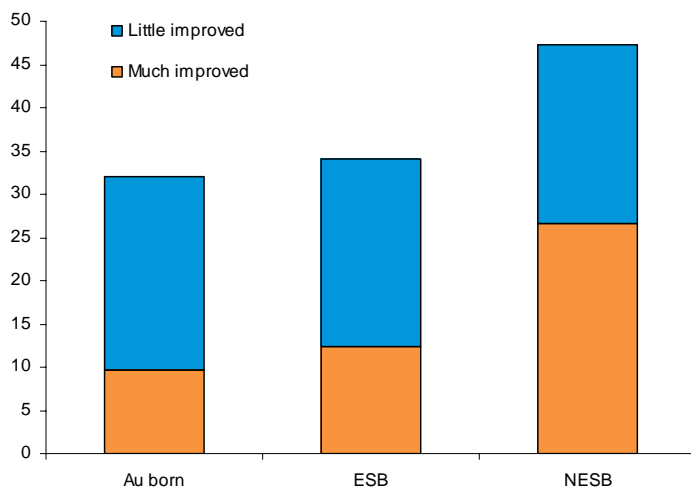
satisfied': 19% Australia-born, 21.8% ESB and just 8.4% NESB. When respondents were asked about their level of happiness over the last 12 months, there was some variation with regard to the second-level response ('happy'), in the range 49–61%, and again a marked divergence at the first level ('very happy'): 35.1% of Australia-born, 42.7% of ESB and 26.2% of NESB (Figure 8.9). On these measures of life satisfaction, the ESB recorded marginally higher levels than the Australia-born.

Figure 8.9: Happiness over the last twelve months



When the future was considered, the NESB recorded the most positive response. Thus when considering their lives in three or four years time, 34% expected that their lives would be 'much improved', compared with 24.5% ESB and 20.4% Australia-born. With regard to the lives of today's children, 26.6% NESB expected that lives would be 'much improved', in marked contrast with 12.4% ESB and 9.6% Australia-born (Figure 8.10).

Figure 8.10: The lives of today's children will be little / much improved



In part the higher expectations for the future may reflect the more difficult experience of life in the present, as indicated by the life satisfaction valuations noted. But it also indicates an environment in which immigrants expect a better life in the future, both for themselves and for their children – a positive endorsement of Australian society. This is an important finding concerning the mood in 2007 among those born overseas, reflected in response to other questions in the survey, for example the view endorsed by 85% ESB and 79.1% NESB that in Australia hard work brings a better life in the long run.

Immigrant cohort analysis

Further analysis of the overseas-born was undertaken by year of arrival to determine whether there were higher levels of identification with increased length of residence. The results of the national survey, the broadest level of analysis, provided strong indication of the success of absorption of immigrants into Australian society.

The overseas-born were divided into three categories: those arriving 1967–81, 1982–96 and 1997–2007. When sense of belonging in Australia was considered, the great majority of respondents (> 90%) across the three categories indicated belonging to a 'moderate' or 'great extent'; but of these, 38.6% of those arriving 1997–2007 indicated belonging at the strongest level, 62.4% of those arriving 1982–96 and 72.1% of the 1967–81 cohort (Figure 8.11 and Table 8.3).

Figure 8.11 Sense of belonging by time of arrival

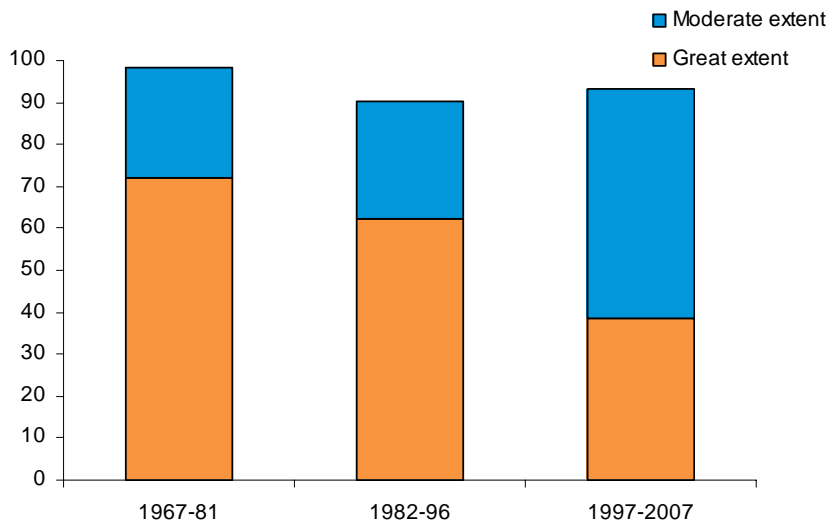


Table 8.3: Immigrant cohort analysis – sense of belonging

		Born overseas - Year of arrival				
To what extent do you have a sense of belonging in Australia?		Born in Australia	Total	1967–81	1982–96	1997–2007
	Great extent	84.2%	64.0%	72.1%	62.4%	38.6%
	Moderate extent	12.7%	30.4%	26.4%	27.9%	54.8%
	Total	96.9%	94.4%	98.4%	90.3%	93.4%
	Total N	1427	574	133	130	156

In similar terms, the sense of pride in Australian life and culture at the great or moderate levels was around 90%, but those expressing pride to a ‘great extent’ increased with length of residence from 40% to 55.4% to 59.1% (Table 8.4).

Table 8.4: Immigrant cohort analysis – sense of pride

		Born overseas - Year of arrival				
To what extent do you take pride in the Australian way of life and culture?		Born in Australia	Total	1967–81	1982–96	1997–2007
	Great extent	59.7%	53.8%	58.6%	55.2%	40.0%
	Moderate extent	34.7%	38.0%	31.9%	39.8%	49.1%
	Total	94.4%	91.8%	90.4%	95.0%	89.1%
	Total N	1427	574	133	130	156

The level of involvement in community life, as indicated by voluntary work, increased over time of residence from 9.6% to 20.8% to 26.3%. While around 82% of immigrants saw Australia as a land of economic opportunity in which hard work was rewarded, the proportion most strongly in agreement increased with length of residence (Table 8.5).

Table 8.5: Immigrant cohort analysis – voluntary work and economic opportunity

		Born overseas - Year of arrival				
		Born in Australia	Total	1967–81	1982–96	1997–2007
Do you currently undertake any voluntary work?	Yes	31.3%	22.1%	29.3%	22.3%	10.5%
Australia is a land of economic opportunity where, in the long run, hard work brings a better life	Strongly agree	33.2%	34.8%	40.7%	36.0%	27.0%
	Agree	46.4%	46.6%	41.9%	45.4%	55.7%
	Total	79.6%	81.4%	82.6%	81.4%	82.8%
	Total N	1427	574	133	130	156

As to be expected, the most recently arrived were most strongly supportive of government assistance to ethnic minorities for maintenance of customs and traditions (1997–2007 at 60.9%, 1982–96 at 49.6%, 1967–81 at 28.8%) (Table 8.6).

Table 8.6: Immigrant cohort analysis – cultural maintenance

		Born overseas - Year of arrival				
Ethnic minorities in Australia should be given government assistance to maintain their customs and traditions		Born in Australia	Total	1967–81	1982–96	1997–2007
	Strongly agree and agree	27.8%	42.7%	28.7%	49.4%	60.8%
	Total N	1427	574	133	130	156

The pattern whereby those with longer residence expressed closer identification with normative Australian values was not, however, repeated in the life satisfaction ratings, indicating that other variables, especially age, may have been of significance in determining response. In terms of present financial circumstances, the total expressing satisfaction was highest for the more recently arrived, although the 1982–97 cohort had the highest proportion in the very satisfied category. (Table 8.7).

The result for those expressing happiness with their lives over the last 12 months was similar across the three arrival cohorts. The most recently arrived, while presumably facing the greatest challenges in establishing themselves, were most optimistic for the future – 79.6% expected that their lives would be significantly better in three or four years (Table 8.7).

Table 8.7: Immigrant cohort analysis – life satisfaction

		Born overseas - Year of arrival				
How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your present financial situation?		Born in Australia	Total	1967–81	1982–96	1997–2007
	Very satisfied	18.9%	14.6%	14.2%	16.2%	10.0%
	Satisfied	55.9%	59.9%	56.0%	60.8%	68.7%
Total satisfied	74.8%	74.5%	70.4%	76.8%	78.7%	
Taking all things into consideration, would you say that over the last year you have been...	Very happy	35.1%	34.6%	32.8%	29.3%	34.8%
	Happy	54.0%	54.5%	56.8%	60.9%	54.6%
	Total happy	89.1%	89.1%	90.1%	90.2%	89.5%
In three or four years, do you think that your life in Australia will be	Much improved and improved	46.0%	55.6%	40.6%	65.6%	79.6%
	Total N	1427	574	133	130	156

Chapter Nine

Local surveys

As discussed in the methodology section of this report, surveys were undertaken in two LGAs in Melbourne, two in Sydney and two SLAs of Brisbane, to enable consideration of attitudes and experience in regions of high immigrant concentration.¹ This final part of the report explores attitudes at the local level, as well as comparing them at the national and local levels. The national benchmark survey provides the context for understanding processes of cohesion and isolation as they operate in the regions of immigrant settlement – the sites for community cohesion, whose attainment depends, in Ted Cantle's (2001) formulation, less on 'systems, processes and institutions . . . , fundamentally . . . on people and their values'. Social cohesion operates not in the abstract, the realm of the 'nation', but at the community level, where people of different backgrounds and cultures make their lives.

The following discussion is concerned to explore three issues: the similarities and differences between attitudes and reported experience at the national and local levels; the extent of divergence across birthplace groups; and the level of disaffection at the local level. Two recent studies are utilised at the outset of this discussion to provide further context for interpreting the results of the 2007 national benchmark surveys.

Community Indicators Victoria project

The Community Indicators Victoria project, discussed in chapter 2, has undertaken a broad-ranging survey to supplement the data sources of the Australian Bureau of Statistics, and of state and local governments. The 2007 survey was administered by telephone and reached a target of 24,000 Victorian adults, with a minimum of 300 respondents in each LGA. A comprehensive set of indicators for each LGA has been made available through the community indicators website.

To obtain an overview of the research findings, specific indicators with relevance for social cohesion were downloaded for 30 Melbourne LGAs and analysed in the context of the 2006 Census. Of particular interest are the census variables of household income and proportion of overseas-born at the LGA level (Table 9.1).

For the purpose of this analysis, data has been sorted by income; average scores and divergence were calculated for groupings of six LGAs. As a further check, the variation between the highest and lowest scores for each variable was calculated (Table 9.2). Utilising a method which concerns itself with the extreme may be questioned. The potential problem is that by focusing on the exceptional it may unbalance the analysis; its importance is that it brings to attention the full range of variation to be found in a society. It makes for understanding of the character of both the typical and of the extreme.

¹ Unless specifically identified, the random component of the local surveys is utilised, not the Middle East-background sample. When data from this sample is utilised, Middle East-background respondents are identified.

Table 9.1: Community Indicators Victoria – selected indicators

Overseas born order	Region	Overseas born %	Age median	ORDER= Household income \$/ week median	Unemployed %	Crime Person /100,000	Crime Property /100,000	Self reported health	Subjective wellbeing	Feel part of the community	Social support	Volunteer	Perception of safety day	Perception of safety night	Food insecurity	Acceptance of diverse cultures	Participation in citizen engagement	
Melbourne Victoria		31.0	36	1078	5.3	774	5609	54.3	76.4	70.7			96.0	66.5	6.0	89.4	53.8	
1	Greater Dandenong	Inner South	56.0	36	770	9.4	1148	7464	43.0	72.4	67.3	89.8	40.5	88.8	47.4	10.6	88.2	34.8
7	Darebin	Inner N-East	34.9	36	905	6.5	815	7621	53.3	74.5	67.8	88.1	32.3	95.2	61.7	7.6	93.9	55.2
3	Brimbank	Inner N-West	46.8	35	921	8.9	895	6280	50.8	75.7	69.3	91.5	32.1	90.4	47.7	4.8	88.8	40.2
8	Moreland	Inner N-West	34.9	36	931	6.1	712	5872	48.9	73.9	68.8	87.4	36.8	95.1	58.7	7.8	91.5	49.8
4	Maribyrnong	Inner West	42.6	34	932	8.5	1113	9945	48.6	73.1	64.5	91.3	27.7	93.4	55.6	7.1	92.4	50.8
25	Frankston	Outer S-East	22.5	36	956	6	1262	7349	50.0	73.1	65.7	93.8	37.6	95.1	55.3	11.6	85.9	50.6
	average 1-6		39.6	35.5	902.5	7.6	990.8	7,421.8	49.1	73.8	67.2	90.3	34.5	93.0	54.4	8.3	90.1	46.9
14	Hobsons Bay	Inner West	31.3	37	1023	5.9	675	5372	54.1	75.1	70.1	90.5	40.8	97.1	65.3	7.7	89.5	53.7
12	Hume	Outer North	31.4	32	1030	7	746	5741	53.3	74.0	67.1	94.3	35.5	93.1	58.4	7.7	86.9	41.5
9	Whittlesea	Outer North	34.6	34	1043	5.9	711	4642	50.1	74.3	67.7	91.6	34.1	93.1	60.0	6.9	91.3	36.9
17	Kingston	Inner S-East	30.3	38	1045	4.5	647	5180	53.9	75.9	70.1	91.4	42.0	97.2	66.5	7.1	88.8	48.2
19	Moonee Valley	Inner N-West	28.8	37	1066	5.1	751	5989	54.0	76.1	69.5	94.2	35.4	94.3	69.0	5.0	90.4	49.3
28	Yarra Ranges	Outer East	17.2	37	1078	4.1	564	3247	51.9	75.8	70.6	92.9	38.0	94.6	66.2	7.0	86.8	60.6
	average 7-12		28.9	35.8	1,047.5	5.4	682.3	5,028.5	52.9	75.2	69.2	92.5	37.6	94.9	64.2	6.9	89.0	48.4
29	Cardinia	Outer S-East	15.1	35	1078	4.2	670	4083	58.3	77.3	69.6	94.1	45.8	93.1	62.8	7.4	85.4	63.8
27	Maroondah	Inner East	19.6	37	1079	3.9	812	5068	51.6	76.1	68.2	93.1	37.9	97.3	55.3	3.8	92.2	48.6
2	Melbourne	Central	49.4	28	1081	7.5	3616	31473	58.6	74.8	65.1	89.8	33.2	95.2	66.8	4.6	93.2	46.7
11	Casey	Outer S-East	32.3	32	1097	5.3	665	4182	54.6	76.8	68.0	92.8	34.4	93.6	60.5	6.3	83.9	47.8
16	Whitehorse	Inner East	30.6	38	1101	4.6	569	4102	47.7	76.1	70.8	92.6	42.2	98.4	66.1	4.4	94.5	53.6
5	Monash	Inner East	42.2	38	1108	5.6	532	4640	50.9	75.2	67.7	90.0	40.2	95.0	68.5	3.7	94.4	40.3
	average 13-18		31.5	34.7	1,090.7	5.2	1,144.0	8,924.7	53.6	76.1	68.2	92.1	39.0	95.4	63.3	5.0	90.6	50.1
10	Glen Eira	Inner S-East	34.5	38	1111	4.1	369	4370	56.6	75.7	69.6	90.7	42.1	97.8	71.0	7.2	93.1	51.4
23	Melton	Outer West	25.9	31	1122	5.9	662	4564	57.7	76.5	68.3	89.9	34.9	96.3	63.3	5.7	87.3	47.3
26	Banyule	Inner N-East	20.8	38	1124	4.2	628	4678	61.2	76.0	69.7	93.7	40.9	97.8	67.8	3.8	91.0	51.2
22	Knox	Inner East	26.4	36	1144	4.2	643	4804	55.5	76.1	68.6	93.9	38.7	94.6	62.9	7.4	88.6	50.5
21	Wyndham	Outer West	26.9	32	1147	5.4	597	4751	50.8	75.2	67.4	91.7	41.0	94.7	57.2	5.3	90.2	45.9
13	Port Phillip	Central	31.4	35	1193	4.4	1183	10201	57.1	74.7	67.4	95.6	33.7	97.8	66.3	5.5	93.9	50.3
	average 19-24		27.7	35.0	1,140.2	4.7	680.3	5,561.3	56.5	75.7	68.5	92.6	38.6	96.5	64.8	5.8	90.7	49.4
15	Yarra	Central	31.0	33	1196	5.1	1381	13430	61.8	74.6	67.7	88.5	33.1	96.5	66.4	10.0	95.9	60.2
6	Manningham	Inner N-East	35.8	41	1213	4.2	282	2450	57.6	76.7	69.0	91.4	45.1	96.7	72.2	3.0	92.3	40.4
18	Stonnington	Central	30.0	36	1346	4.1	888	9838	62.1	77.3	67.7	89.6	34.5	98.5	72.1	2.8	92.6	53.7
24	Bayside	Inner S-East	23.8	41	1440	3.3	431	3599	62.8	78.5	74.4	91.2	47.4	99.2	80.1	3.6	91.0	56.3
20	Boroondara	Inner East	27.1	38	1517	3.9	394	4072	58.5	77.8	71.4	92.9	42.8	97.0	76.0	1.8	94.5	56.7
30	Nillumbik	Outer North	14.8	36	1522	3	260	1964	57.3	78.8	72.5	96.4	45.4	96.9	76.5	4.8	91.1	55.8
	Average 25-30		27.1	37.5	1,372.3	3.9	606.0	5,892.2	60.0	77.3	70.5	91.7	41.4	97.5	73.9	4.3	92.9	53.9

Key

Self-Reported Health. Respondents were asked to rate their health as excellent, very good, good, fair or poor.

Subjective Wellbeing. Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with their lives on a number of domains resulting in an aggregated Personal Wellbeing Index ranging between 0-100. The Index includes 7 domains: how satisfied are you with your standard of living?... your health?... what you are currently achieving in life?... your personal relationships?... how safe you feel?... feeling part of your community?... your future security?

Feeling part of the community. Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with their lives on a number of domains resulting in an aggregated Personal Wellbeing Index ranging between 0-100.

Social support. Respondents were asked if they could get help from friends, family or neighbours when they needed it, either definitely, sometimes or not at all.

Volunteering. Respondents were asked whether or not they helped out as a volunteer.

Perceptions of safety. Respondents were asked to rate how safe they felt when walking alone in their local area during the day and at night.

Food insecurity. Respondents were asked if there had been any times in the previous 12 months when they had run out of food and could not afford to buy more.

Acceptance of diverse cultures. Respondents were asked if they agreed that "it is a good thing for a society to be made up of people from different cultures".

Participation in citizen engagement. Respondents were asked if they had attended a town meeting or public hearing, met, called or written to a local politician, joined a protest or signed a petition in the previous 12 months.

The [Social Indicators](#) project yields three findings of major importance for this analysis. First, a number of key indicators yield consistent scores towards the high end of the scale. Thus the personal wellbeing index, a composite of satisfaction with standard of living, health, achievement in life, personal relationships, safety, feeling part of the community, and personal security, yields scores in the range 73.8 to 77.3 across the grouping of LGAs (with a possible maximum score of 100); at the extremes there is a range from a low of 72.4 to a high of 78.8. The indicator of acceptance of diverse cultures yields average scores above 90, with the range at the extremes from 83.9 to 95.9. (Table 9.2) To measure food insecurity, respondents were asked the number of times in the previous 12 months they had run out of food and could not afford to buy more. The maximum score was a relatively low (although serious) 12 occasions, in a context in which there was only one LGA with a score under three. (Table 9.1)

A second major finding is the relatively low level of variation across LGAs. Thus variation between the LGA groupings for the personal wellbeing index is 4.7%; if the lowest and highest scores are compared, the variation is only 8.8%. With regard to a key indicator for social cohesion, the extent to which respondents feel themselves to be part of the community, the variation across the LGA groupings is 4.9%; at the extremes it is 15.4%.

Greatest divergences for the indicators examined are within the domain of participation, as understood in the present study, also in the pattern of income distribution and immigrant concentration.

‘Citizen engagement’ was measured with reference to involvement in political activities such as attendance at a local meeting, contacting a local politician, joining a protest or signing a petition in the previous 12 months. The variation was 14.9% across the LGA groupings, a very high 83.3% at the extremes. The index of involvement in voluntary activity also disclosed marked variation, 20% across the LGA groupings and 50.2% at the extremes.

The 2006 Census data reveals markedly higher variation in income distribution and residential concentration of the overseas-born than the attitudinal and behavioural indexes. There is also a measure of correlation between areas of high immigrant concentration and low income. Thus six of the top 10 areas of overseas-born population are within the 10 lowest income LGAs (Tables 9.1 and 9.2).

Table 9.2: Community Indicators Victoria: analysis of social indicators, average by household income groupings

Quintile	Income h'hold	Born o/seas %	Personal Wellbeing index	Feel part of the comm.	Accept diverse cultures	Social support	Citizen engagement	Volunteer
1. Lowest income	\$903	39.6	73.8	67.2	90.1	90.3	46.9	34.5
2.	\$1,048	28.9	75.2	69.2	89.0	92.5	48.4	37.6
3.	\$1,091	31.5	76.1	68.2	90.6	92.1	50.1	39.0
4.	\$1,140	27.7	75.7	68.5	90.7	92.6	49.4	38.6
5. Highest income	\$1,372	27.1	77.3	70.5	92.9	91.7	53.9	41.4
Grouping variance								
Variance (score)	\$469	12.5	3.5	3.3	3.9	2.3	7.0	6.9
Variance %	51.9	46.1	4.7	4.9	4.4	2.5	14.9	20.0
Extreme variance								
Lowest (score)	\$770	14.8	72.4	64.5	83.9	87.4	34.8	27.7
Highest (score)	\$1522	56.0	78.8	74.4	95.9	96.4	63.8	41.6
Variance (score)	\$752	41.2	6.4	9.9	12.0	9.0	29.0	13.9
Variance (%)	97.7	278.4	8.8	15.4	14.3	10.3	83.3	50.2

For definition of categories, see Table 9.1.

A second survey, briefly noted here, was undertaken to develop the case study methodology employed in the 2007 national benchmark survey. The survey was undertaken within Greater Dandenong, the Melbourne LGA with the highest concentration of overseas-born and which figures at or near the low point on a number of indicators in the Community Indicators project. The survey was administered in the suburbs of Springvale and Dingley Village and contiguous areas, the former an area of particularly heavy immigrant concentration, the latter located in close proximity and with a high proportion of Australia-born residents.

The survey of the Australia-born indicates a high level of acceptance of non-discriminatory government policies and opposition to overt racial discrimination – endorsed by all but a very small minority (under 10%). At the same time, a significant proportion of the Australia-born are concerned with the pace of immigration and its impact.

The survey uncovered evidence of considerable misunderstanding and value divergence when the attitudes of the two surveyed birthplace groups were compared. This was evident when immigration and settlement issues were considered, and when Australia-born perceptions of immigrant groups were compared with attitudes within those groups.

To take three examples of divergence, 41.9% of the Australia-born residents of Dingley Village agree with the proposition that 'Australians are justified in thinking their way of life is threatened by multiculturalism', compared with 13.6% of the Vietnam-born residents of Springvale. More than four of 10 (42.9%) Australia-born endorse the proposition that 'Asian migrants are interested in personal gain, not in building a better Australia', compared with less than two of 10 (18.7%) Vietnam-born. While more than six of 10 Australia-born agree that Asian migrants 'don't make much effort to mix with Australians', only two of 10 Vietnam-born are of this view (Table 9.3). (Markus & Dharmalingam 2007b)

Table 9.3: Perception of social interaction by Asian immigrants, 2006

	Australia-born (Dingley Village)	Vietnam-born (Springvale)
Strongly agree	17.3%	8.8%
Agree	48.0%	12.5%
Unsure	16.8%	17.2%
Disagree	12.2%	25.8%
Strongly disagree	3.3%	31.4%
Refused	2.4%	4.3%
Total	100%	100%
Total N	206	174

Statement: 'Asian migrants tend to keep to themselves and don't make much effort to mix with Australians'.
 Source: Markus & Dharmalingam 2007b.

The 2007 surveys

As outlined in the methodological discussion Chapter 2 of this report, the approach adopted here is concerned with the contextualisation of data and with patterns, not with close analysis of individual questions undertaken in isolation. The results of the local surveys are analysed in the context of the national benchmark data.

The key findings that emerge from this contextualised analysis are:

- Divergence is within a narrow range when aggregated national and local data are considered.
- Divergence is within a similarly narrow range when identical birthplace groups are compared at the national and local levels. This is an important finding concerning the character of areas of high immigrant concentration; a possible social development is the heightening of tensions and of alienation in the context of high immigrant concentration, but the 2007 surveys do not provide evidence that this is occurring at a community level, although there are minorities within birthplace groups with specific concerns.
- Comparison between birthplace groups reveals a large measure of divergence on many indicators.
- The major divergences are in levels of acceptance and participation, indicating lower levels of social capital in areas of high immigrant concentration.

Aggregated data

The extent of variation between the aggregated findings of the national survey and local surveys in areas of high immigrant concentration is within a narrow range for many indicators. The findings parallel those of the Community Indicators Victoria project; statistical analysis of divergence across the five domains of social cohesion indicates the smallest variation within the domains of belonging, social justice and sense of worth. Thus there is little variation in level of happiness, the view of Australia as a land of economic opportunity and appraisal of the value of a diverse immigration program; there is marginally stronger sense of belonging, pride and financial satisfaction at the national level.

The highest variance is in the domains of acceptance and participation. Variance is particularly marked in response to four questions. Ranked from the most divergent, these relate to reported experience of discrimination, engagement in voluntary work, attitude towards government assistance to ethnic minorities to maintain their customs and traditions, and level of trust (Figure 9.1 and Table 9.4). These findings are qualified, however, when the difference in the samples is considered, explaining, for example, the heightened support for government assistance to ethnic minorities in the local surveys. In the national survey, 72.8% of respondents were Australia-born, 14.8% NESB. In the local surveys conducted in areas of high immigrant concentration, 47.3% of respondents were Australia-born, 43.6% NESB. This highlights the limited use of aggregated data and the need to compare like with like (those of the same birthplace group in different contexts), and, within the same context, to utilise disaggregated data identifying specific birthplace groups so that analysis is informed by knowledge of the characteristics of the sub-groups under consideration. This approach informs the following analysis.

Figure 9.1: National and local surveys, selected questions

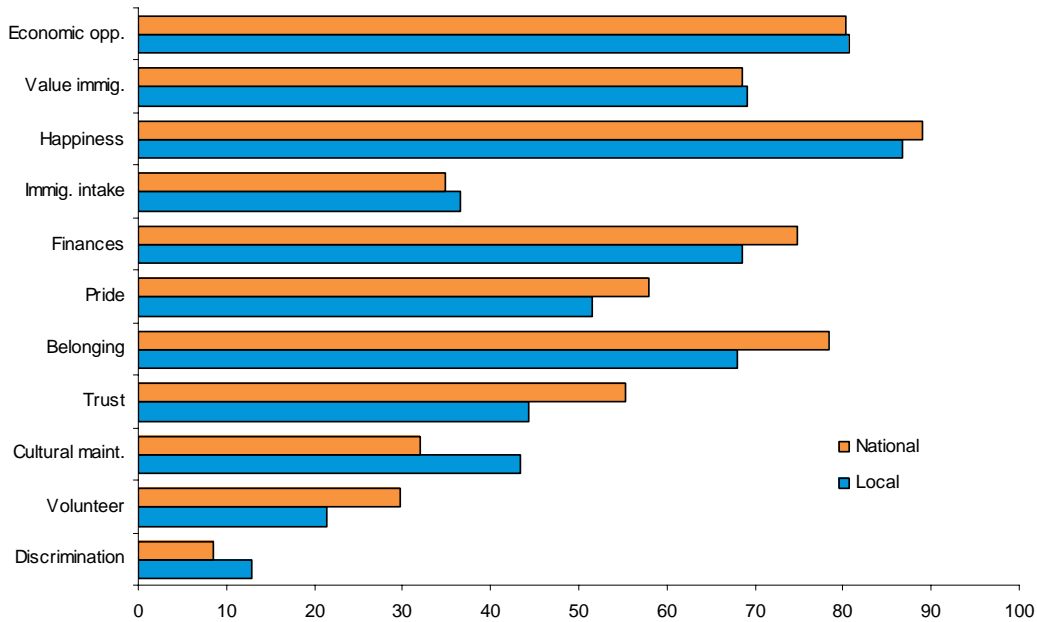


Table 9.4: National and local surveys: selected questions

Domain	Question	National	Local	% variance
SJ	Australia is a land of economic opportunity – agree	80.3%	80.8%	0.4%
A	Immigrants from different countries make Australia stronger – agree	68.5%	69.1%	0.9%
W	Happiness over the last year – happy	89.1%	86.8%	2.6%
A	Number of immigrants – too high	34.9%	36.6%	4.9%
W	Present financial situation – satisfied	74.8%	68.6%	9.0%
B	Pride in the Australian way of life – great	58.0%	51.6%	12.4%
B	Sense of belonging in Australia – great	78.4%	68.0%	15.3%
A	Most people can be trusted	55.3%	44.4%	24.5%
A	Government assistance for maintenance of customs and traditions – agree	32.1%	43.4%	35.2%
P	Undertake voluntary work	29.8%	21.4%	39.3%
A	Experienced discrimination last year	8.6%	12.8%	48.8%
	MEDIAN			12.4%
	AVERAGE VARIANCE			17.6%
TOTAL N		2001	1141	

Key: A= acceptance; B= belonging; P = participation; SJ = social justice; W = worth.

Long-time Australian

When long-time Australian respondents (Australia-born with both parents Australia-born) are compared, there is a close similarity of response at the national and local levels. Thus, level of happiness over the last year (very happy and happy) is 89.5% at the national level and 89.9% at the local; with regard to present financial situation (very satisfied and satisfied) the finding is 76.2% at the national level, 74.2% at the local. In contrast with the aggregated data, involvement in voluntary work reveals less differentiation, although with lower involvement at the local level.

Areas of significant difference in the local survey are lower levels of trust, lower levels of support for government assistance to ethnic minorities, heightened experience of discrimination and heightened opposition to the immigration intake, although a clear majority endorse the general proposal that 'accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger' (Figure 9.2, Table 9.5).

Figure 9.2: Long-time Australian, selected questions

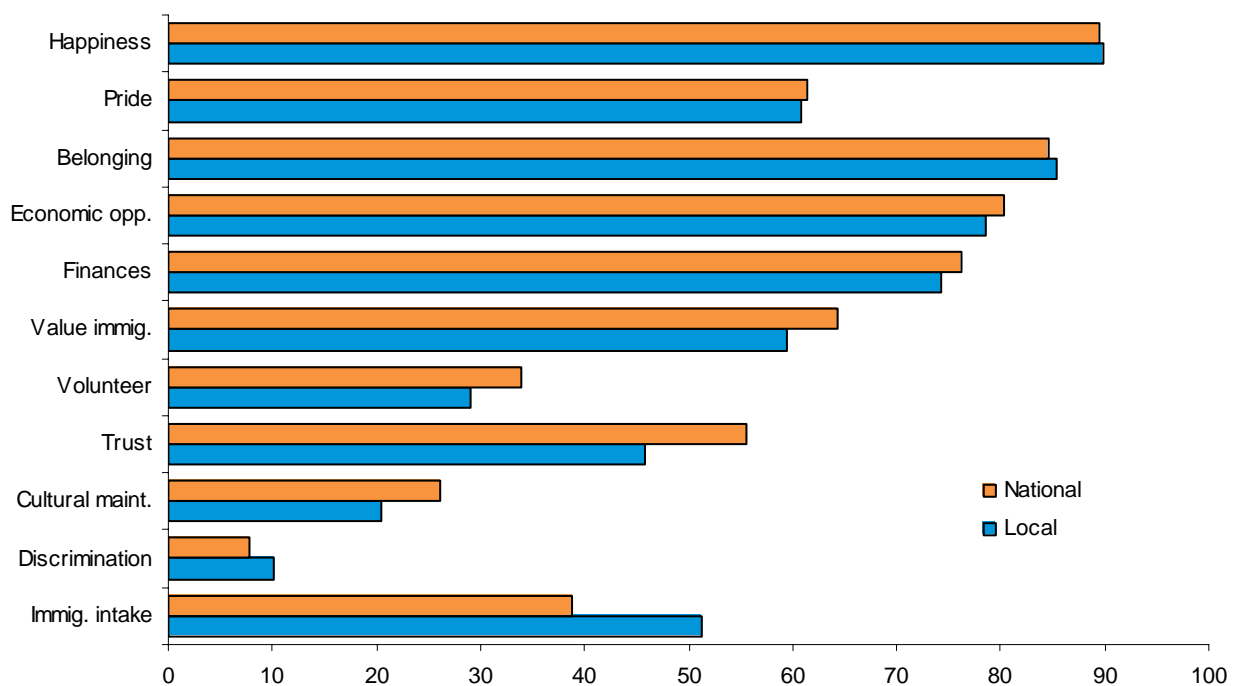


Table 9.5: Long-time Australian, selected questions

Question	National	Local	% variance
Happiness over the last year – happy	89.5%	89.9%	0.4
Pride in the Australian way of life – great	61.4%	60.9%	0.8
Sense of belonging in Australia – great	84.6%	85.3%	0.8
Australia is a land of economic opportunity – agree	80.3%	78.5%	2.3
Present financial situation – satisfied	76.2%	74.2%	2.7
Immigrants from diverse sources make Australia stronger – agree	64.4%	59.4%	8.4
Undertake voluntary work	33.9%	29.1%	16.5
Most people can be trusted	55.6%	45.8%	21.4
Government assistance for maintenance of customs and traditions – agree	26.2%	20.5%	27.8
Experienced discrimination last year	7.8%	10.1%	29.5
Number of immigrants – too high	38.8%	51.3%	32.2
TOTAL N	1063	307	

When level of contact across ethnic and religious boundaries is considered, defined as visits to people of other ethnicity of faith, there is indication of slightly increased mixing across ethnic boundaries at the local level, greater mixing across religious boundaries at the national level. Given the greater ethnic diversity of the local communities surveyed, the difference at the national and local levels, measured by visits several times each month, is surprisingly small – up from 36.7% to 39.9% (Table 9.6).

Table 9.6: Long-time Australian – visit people of other nationality or ethnicity, other faith or religion

	National Visit people of other nationality/ethnicity	Local Visit people of other nationality/ethnicity	National Visit people of other faith/religion	Local Visit people of other faith/religion
Several times a month	36.7%	39.9%	39.9%	33.9%
Not at all	24.3%	18.5%	16.6%	19.9%
Total N	1061	308	1062	307

NESB

The second disaggregated comparison was undertaken between the overseas-born whose first language is other than English.

As with the long-time Australians, there is a similarity in response, with the proviso that at the national level there is a higher proportion of the NESB group who respond in the first positive ('great' rather than 'moderate') with regard to sense of belonging and pride. When the two positive responses are aggregated, the proportion providing a positive response numbers close to 90% across the national and local levels.

At the national level a higher proportion respond that they are 'very happy' and expect that their lives will be better in three or four years, but at the local level there is a stronger sense of expected improvement in the lives of children. As noted earlier, this expectation is a contextual judgement influenced by the present circumstances of the respondent. Interestingly, there is stronger endorsement of the proposition that Australia is a land of economic opportunity at the local level and less concern about the level of immigration.

The largest divergence is in the heightened reporting of discrimination at the local level and the lowered level of political participation (Figure 9.3, Tables 9.7 and 9.8).

Figure 9.3: NESB, first language other than English, selected questions

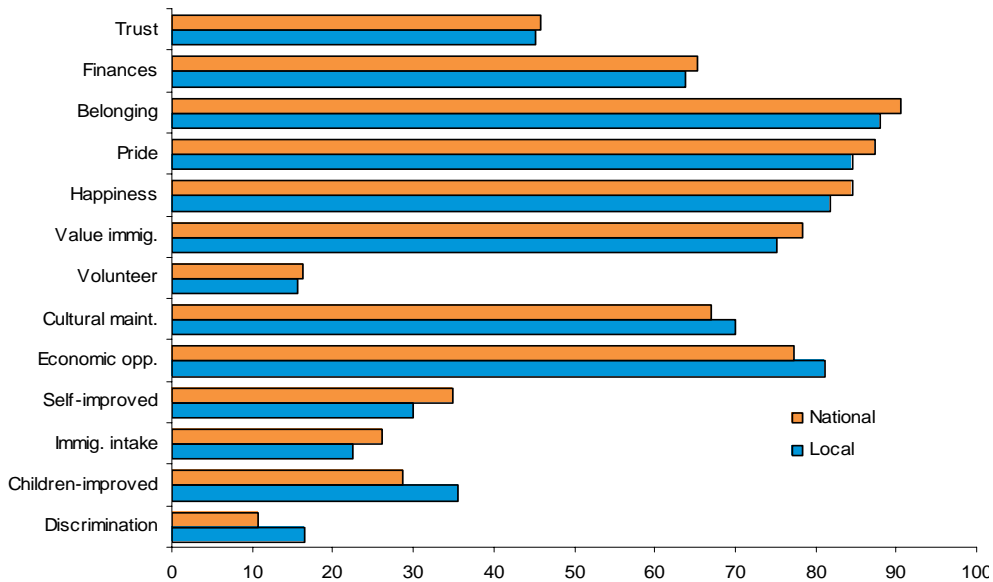


Table 9.7: NESB, first language other than English, selected questions

Question	National	Local	% variance
Most people can be trusted	45.9%	45.1%	1.8
Present financial situation – satisfied	65.3%	63.9%	2.2
Sense of belonging in Australia – great, moderate, total	56.4% 34.2% 90.6%	48.4% 39.6% 88.0%	3.0
Pride in the Australian way of life – great, moderate, total	51.6% 35.8% 87.4%	39.0% 45.6% 84.6%	3.3
Happiness over the last year – very happy, happy, total	23.5% 61.1% 84.6%	18.1% 63.7% 81.8%	3.4
Immigrants from different countries make Australia stronger – agree	78.3%	75.2%	4.1
Undertake voluntary work	16.3%	15.6%	4.5
Government assistance for maintenance of customs and traditions – agree	67.1%	70.1%	4.5
Australia is a land of economic opportunity – strongly agree, agree, total	27.2% 50.1% 77.3%	33.3% 47.8% 81.1%	4.9
In three or four years, my life will be much improved	35.0%	30.0%	16.7
Number of immigrants – too high	26.1%	22.1%	18.1
Children’s lives will be much improved	28.6%	35.6%	24.5
Experienced discrimination in last year	10.7%	16.4%	53.5
TOTAL N	207	408	

Table 9.8: NESB, first language other than English: participation in politics over the last three years, national and local surveys

Activity	National	Local
Voted	60.7%	70.6%
Signed petition	27.1%	15.0%
Contacted MP	13.6%	8.1%
Attended meeting	7.4%	2.2%
Joined boycott	4.6%	2.5%
Attended demonstration	15.1%	6.6%
Joined strike	3.1%	2.7%
Total N	207	408

With regard to contact across ethnic and religious boundaries, NESB respondents report more frequent contact for both variables at the national level, with a substantial difference for visits to other ethnic or national groups several times a month (40.3% compared with 27.5%) (Table 9.9).

Table 9.9: NESB: first language other than English: visit people of other nationality or ethnicity, other faith or religion

	National Visit people of other nationality/ethnicity	Local Visit people of other nationality/ethnicity	National Visit people of other faith/religion	Local Visit people of other faith/religion
Several times a month	40.3%	27.5%	28.7%	25.5%
Not at all	19.9%	27.8%	24.8%	27.7%
Total N	207	407	207	408

Comparison between birthplace groups

The descriptive analysis to this point has found a large measure of similarity within three of the five domains of social cohesion when data was compared at the aggregated national and local levels, and when the findings for the same birthplace groups were compared across the national and local levels.

When a third form of comparison is undertaken, between different birthplace groups at the national and local levels, a larger measure of divergence is evident, although not for all indicators. With regard to sense of belonging, for example, there is a positive response above 85% for all groups considered, although a much higher proportion of long-time Australians indicate a 'great' sense of belonging (Table 9.10). This pattern is evident in response to a number of other questions in the domains of belonging and worth.

Table 9.10: Sense of belonging in Australia

	National Long-time Australian	Local Long-time Australian	National NESB, first language other than English	Local NESB, first language other than English	Local First language Cantonese, Mandarin or Vietnamese	Local Middle East background
Great	84.6%	85.3%	56.4%	48.4%	37.7%	60.7%
Moderate	12.6%	12.4%	34.2%	39.6%	49.1%	24.2%
Great and moderate	97.2%	97.7%	90.6%	88.0%	86.8%	84.9%
TOTAL N	1062	307	207	407	175	298

As discussed, major areas of divergence are located within the domains of acceptance and participation. When this finding is considered at the disaggregated level for birthplace and ethnic group, major divergence is evident in response to questions concerning involvement in voluntary work and participation in politics, with the exception that those of Middle East background show higher levels of political involvement.

It was previously noted that around 30–35% of Australians are typically engaged in some form of voluntary work. The national survey found that 33.9% of the long-time Australians were involved in voluntary work and the local survey indicated involvement of 29.1% of respondents. Around half this proportion engaged in voluntary work within the NESB group; the proportion is lowest among those of Middle East background at 12.4% (Table 9.11).

Table 9.11: Involvement in voluntary work

	National Long-time Australian	Local Long-time Australian	National NESB, first language other than English	Local NESB, first language other than English	Local First language Cantonese, Mandarin or Vietnamese	Local Middle East background
Yes	33.9%	29.1%	16.3%	15.6%	15.7%	12.4%
TOTAL N	1062	307	207	408	175	299

The lowest level of political involvement, with the exception of participation in an election, is among those of Chinese or Vietnamese background. Thus only 11.8% had signed a petition over the last three years, compared with 64.8% of the national survey long-time Australian respondents; only 1.9% had joined a boycott, compared with 15.5% of the long-time Australian. The Middle East background were more involved, for example 12.4% had contacted an MP and 9.4% had attended a demonstration; in most categories the involvement of those of Middle East background was lower than that of long-time Australians at the local and national levels, but considerably above the average for NESB respondents at the local level (Table 9.12).

Table 9.12: Participation in politics over the last three years

	National Long-time Australian	Local Long-time Australian	National NESB, first language other than English	Local NESB, first language other than English	Local First language Cantonese, Mandarin or Vietnamese	Local Middle East background – first generation
Voted	93.5%	96.7%	60.7%	70.6%	71.3%	85.3%
Signed petition	64.8%	51.1%	27.1%	15.0%	11.8%	23.1%
Contacted MP	28.3%	22.5%	13.6%	8.1%	3.9%	12.4%
Attended meeting	11.3%	6.8%	7.4%	2.2%	0.9%	4.7%
Joined boycott	15.5%	10.4%	4.6%	2.5%	1.9%	5.0%
Attended demonstration	14.0%	7.8%	15.1%	6.6%	5.9%	9.4%
Joined strike	4.7%	6.8%	3.1%	2.7%	1.1%	2.3%
TOTAL N	1062	307	207	408	175	299

With regard to contact across ethnic or national boundaries, there are two significant findings: the most frequent contacts are reported by NESB respondents at the national level, marginally ahead of long-time Australians; second, as has been noted, there is a marginally higher level of visits by the long-time Australians at the local level compared with the national level, as would be expected in regions of greater ethnic or national diversity. This pattern is not replicated for NESB respondents, with higher level of visits at the national level; the lowest reported level is by those whose first language is Mandarin, Cantonese or Vietnamese (Table 9.13).

Table 9.13: Visit people of other nationality or ethnicity

	National Long-time Australian	Local Long-time Australian	National NESB, first language other than English	Local NESB, first language other than English	Local First language Cantonese, Mandarin or Vietnamese	Local Middle East background
Several times a month	36.7%	39.9%	40.3%	27.5%	21.3%	36.8%
Not at all	24.3%	18.5%	19.9%	27.8%	35.6%	28.8%
Total N	1061	308	207	407	174	299

Within the domain of acceptance, marked differences are evident with regard to immigration and settlement issues at the local level. Among NESB respondents there is a much smaller proportion of the view that the immigration intake is too high, particularly among those of Chinese or Vietnamese background. The NESB groups give strong endorsement to the value of immigration from different countries. On the issue of government assistance to ethnic minorities to maintain their customs and traditions, there was agreement from 20.5% among the long-time Australians, from 65.1% to 82.3% among the NESB groups (Table 9.14).

Table 9.14: Attitude to immigration issues

	Local Long-time Australian	Local NESB, first language other than English	Local First language Cantonese, Mandarin or Vietnamese	Local Middle East background
Number of immigrants – too high	51.3%	22.1%	8.6%	27.4%
Immigrants from different countries makes Australia stronger – strongly agree	17.5%	34.2%	36.0%	36.1%
Government assistance to ethnic minorities to maintain customs and traditions – agree	20.5%	70.1%	82.3%	65.1%
TOTAL N	307	408	175	298

There was also marked difference in the reported experience of discrimination. Of the long-time Australians, 20% reported discrimination on the basis of nationality or ethnicity, compared with the highest response rate of 53.6% for those whose first language is Mandarin, Cantonese or Vietnamese. Almost three in 10 respondents of Middle East background reported experience of discrimination on the basis of religion, compared with less than 10% for other groups, including a very low proportion among those whose first language is Mandarin, Cantonese or Vietnamese (Table 9.15).

Of the long-time Australians, 10.3% at the local level reported experience of discrimination over the last 12 months (7.8% at the national level); 16.3% % of NESB respondents at the local level reported experience of discrimination over the last 12 months (10.7 and at the national level), similar to the level reported by those whose first language is Mandarin, Cantonese or Vietnamese, slightly lower for those of Middle East background (Figure 9.4, Table 9.15).

Around 5% of long-time Australian and Chinese- and Vietnamese-background respondents report experience of discrimination once or twice per week or once or twice per month, half the reported experience of aggregated NESB respondents (10%) and Middle East-background respondents (10.8%).

Discriminatory incidents are most likely to occur in the street, workplace, shops and school. Most incidents take the form of verbal abuse; depending on birthplace group, between 0.4% and 2.1% reported cases of property damage, 2.3% to 3.7% reported a physical attack. This incidence is similar to the 2% reported at the national level for property damage and physical attack, with slightly lower incidence at the local level reported by the long-time Australian and a higher proportion by NESB respondents.

Figure 9.4: Experience of discrimination, long-time Australian and overseas born

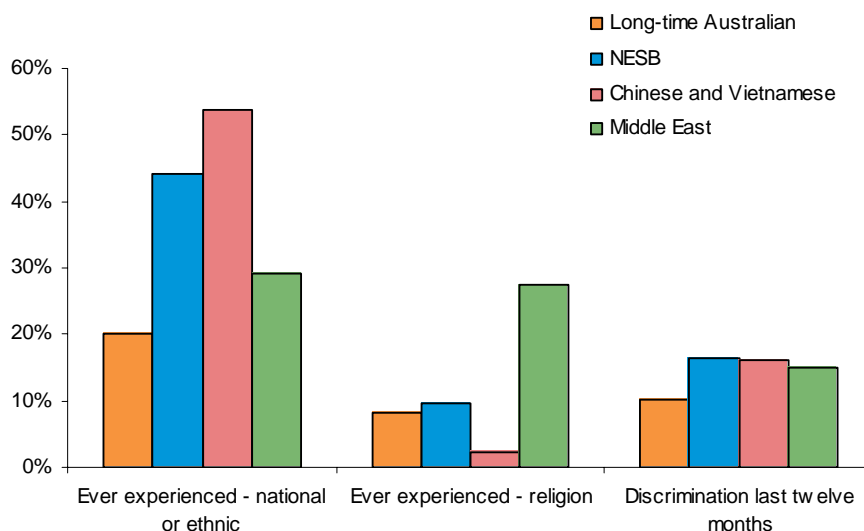


Table 9.15: Experience of discrimination

	Local Long-time Australian	Local NESB, first language other than English	Local First language Cantonese, Mandarin or Vietnamese	Local Middle East background
Ever experienced – national or ethnic	20.0%	44.1%	53.6%	29.2%
Ever experienced – religion	8.1%	9.5%	2.0%	27.5%
Experienced discrimination last 12 months	10.3%	16.3%	16.0%	15.1%
Frequency discrimination – once/twice per week	2.8%	3.1%	2.1%	2.7%
Frequency discrimination – once/twice per month	1.8%	6.9%	3.6%	8.1%
Where occur – shop	10.8%	12.3%	13.3%	11.1%
Where occur – government office	2.7%	5.5%	5.7%	7.4%
Where occur – seeking employment/at work	7.5%	22.5%	19.5%	12.4%
Where occur – rent/buy accommodation	1.6%	3.7%	1.6%	4.7%
Where occur – at school	6.7%	13.1%	12.8%	13.1%
Where occur – on the street	10.9%	24.1%	31.4%	22.8%
Form of discrimination – feel did not belong	12.1%	24.8%	26.7%	23.5%
Form of discrimination – verbally abused	12.7%	28.4%	35.2%	21.8%
Form of discrimination – not offered a job	1.3%	8.2%	3.3%	5.7%
Form of discrimination – not promoted/treated fairly at work	2.3%	9.7%	6.6%	7.4%
Form of discrimination – property damaged	1.3%	2.1%	0.4%	1.0%
Form of discrimination – physically attacked	2.3%	3.7%	3.3%	3.0%
Total N	307	408	175	298

The level of disaffection

To establish the level of disaffection, the extent of clustering of responses to six life satisfaction and sense of belonging indicators was considered. It was hypothesised that these indicators would most clearly identify respondents who were disaffected with their lives and alienated from Australian society.

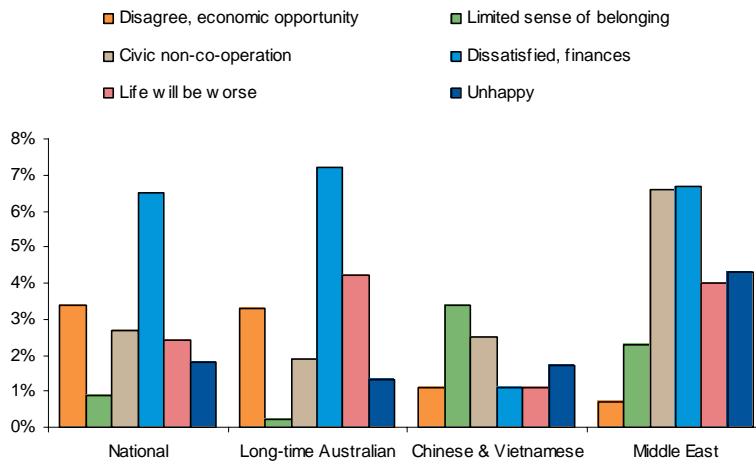
Given the differing economic fortunes across birthplace groups in areas of high immigrant concentration, disaffection does not surprise – the challenge is to obtain a measure of scale or magnitude. The workforce status at the 2006 Census was tabulated for the Australia-, China-, Vietnam-, Turkey-, and Lebanon-born in the four Melbourne and Sydney LGAs surveyed, provided that a minimum 2000 of the birthplace group resided in the LGA. The level of unemployment for the Australia-born ranged from a low of 5.9% to a high of 7.9%; for those born in Vietnam, from 7.0% to 14.0%; for those born in China, from 11.2% to 13.6%; for those born in Turkey, from 12.6% to 13.6%; and for those born in Lebanon, from 14.5% to 16.9%. The census also provides evidence of differences in the workforce participation rate: an average of 38% of the Australia-born population was not in the workforce, 40% of Vietnam-born, 49% of the China-born, 55% of the Turkey-born and 60% of the Lebanon-born.

The five questions selected concern levels of happiness, expectations for the future, financial satisfaction, sense of belonging, and view of economic opportunity. The sixth response is a composite score for civic non-co-operation, replicating three questions employed in World Values Surveys: they ask respondents to indicate if there can be justification for claiming government benefits without entitlement, for avoidance of fares on public transport, and for cheating in payment of taxes if there is the opportunity to do so.

Responses were analysed for three sub-groups: long-time Australians, those whose first language is Cantonese, Mandarin or Vietnamese, and those of Middle East background. Results are benchmarked against the national survey to provide the context for interpretation of results.

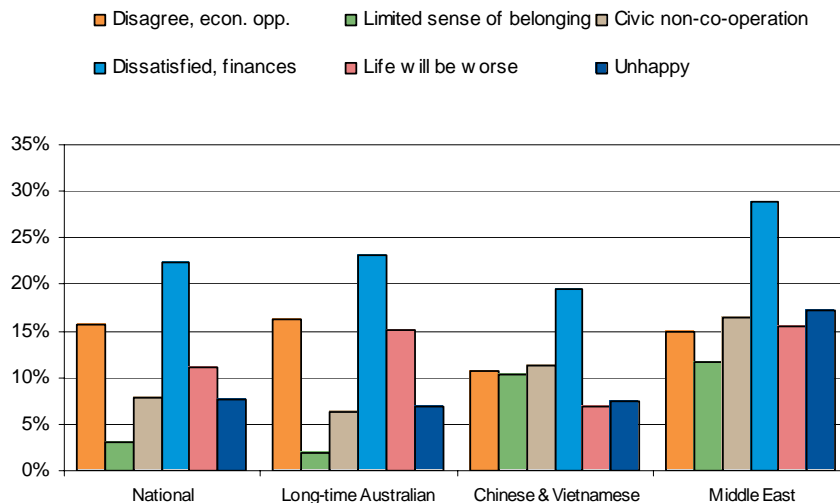
When the highest level of negative response is considered, responses at or in excess of 5% (a very low level) are found for two indicators among the Middle East background, one among the long-time Australians and none among those of Chinese or Vietnamese background. At the national level, there is one response above 5%. The question yielding the highest negative response for three of the four groups relates to present financial circumstances (Figure 9.5).

Figure 9.5: Life satisfaction indicators, highest negative



When both negative responses are considered (very dissatisfied, dissatisfied; strongly disagree, disagree; very unhappy, unhappy; much worse, a little worse), the highest clustering was at the level of 15% of respondents, for one of the four groups analysed (Figure 9.6). Responses at this level are found for five indicators among those of Middle East background, three indicators among the long-time Australians, one indicator among those of Chinese and Vietnamese background, and two indicators at the national level.

Figure 9.6: Life satisfaction-indicators, combined negative



Four conclusions may be drawn from these findings:

- the proportion of negative responses is very low
- dissatisfaction with personal finances produces the highest level of negative response
- the highest negative clustering is among the Middle East-background sub-group
- sense of belonging yields least negative response across the groups analysed.

It is not intended to suggest that the level of negative response identified constitutes a serious problem; rather, this study has set out to explore divergence of opinion and to understand the significance of divergence in the context of potential threats to social cohesion. All modern societies are characterised by diversity of opinion and disaffection. When benchmarked against subsequent research, the key finding of the 2007 surveys may prove to be that the level of disaffection and threat to social cohesion is at historically low levels in contemporary Australia.

For the present, in analysing the survey findings attention has been directed to further understanding the outlook of the disaffected, with specific attention to those sub-groups indicating the highest proportion of disaffection with personal finances, those of Middle East background and the long-time Australians.

The sub-sample of Middle East background comprises 299 respondents. Of these, 28.8% (86 respondents) indicated dissatisfaction with finances, 58.9% (176 respondents) indicated satisfaction, with the remainder either providing a mid-point or no answer. When the responses to a range of questions by the dissatisfied and satisfied are compared, there is a low level of divergence.

Variance greater than ten percentage points is found only in response to one question, with the financially dissatisfied indicating heightened levels of unhappiness (30.2%, compared with 10.2% for the financially satisfied); variance in the range five to ten percentage points is found in response to three questions: there is heightened pessimism for the future, but slightly higher level of trust and lower concern over immigration. In response to five other questions the variation is under five percentage points. (Figures 9.7 and 9.8).

Figure 9.7: Variance: responses of financially dissatisfied compared with responses of financially satisfied, Middle East background

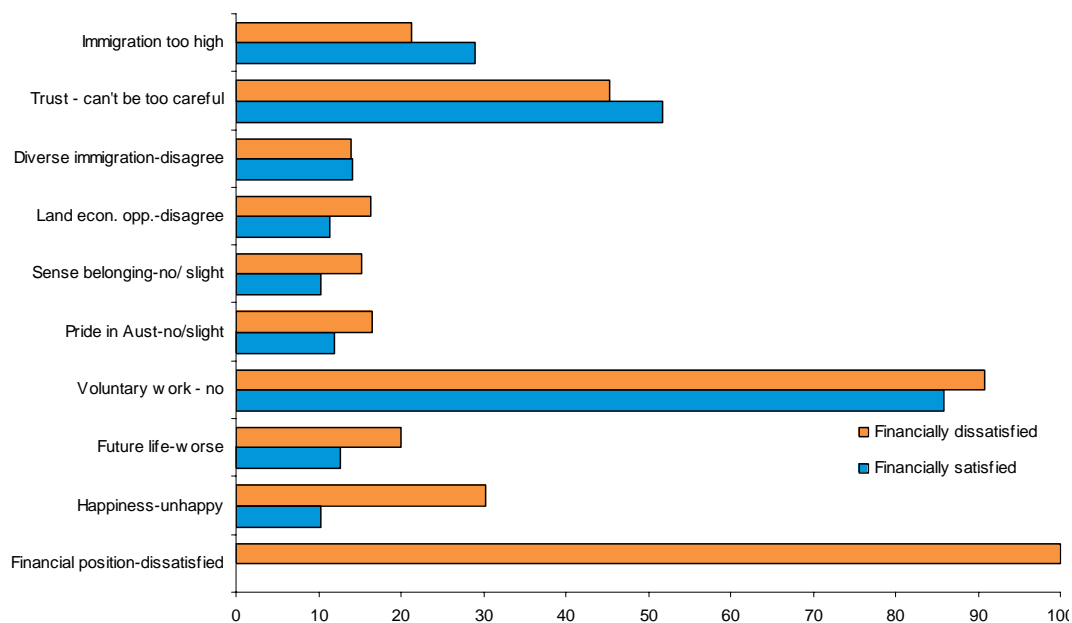
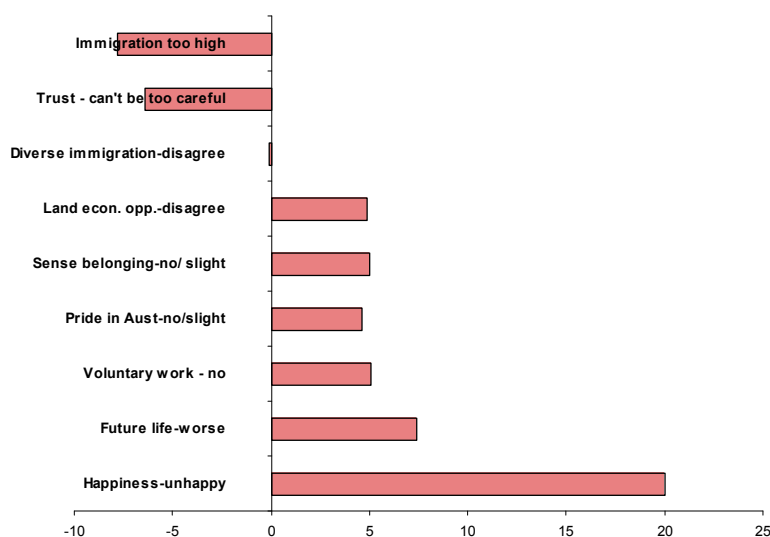


Figure 9.8: Variance (percentage), responses of financially dissatisfied compared with responses of financially satisfied, Middle East background



The general conclusion to be drawn from this analysis of association with financial dissatisfaction for the Middle East-background sub-sample is that while there is heightened negativity at a level of significance concerning level of happiness, there is no pattern of wider associations, no indication of widespread alienation and disenchantment with life in Australia.

A similar comparison was undertaken for long-time Australians. The sub-sample comprises 307 respondents. Of these, 23.3% (71 respondents) indicated dissatisfaction with finances, 74.1% (227 respondents) indicated satisfaction, with the remainder either providing a mid-point or no answer.

As to be expected, a significantly higher proportion of the financially dissatisfied reject the proposition that Australia is a land of economic opportunity (29.8%, 12.9% for the satisfied or reference group) and there is less optimism for the future, with 22.3% expecting that their lives would be worse in three or four years compared with 12.3% for those satisfied with their financial position. The dissatisfied group also indicate markedly lower levels of trust ('can't be too careful in dealing with people' 66.7%, 47.2%) and lower levels of life happiness.

There is also a markedly higher level of opposition to the current immigration intake (65.7%, 47.6%), but much lower level of divergence when the value of immigration from different countries is considered (40.7%, 33.8%). There is a high level of disagreement with government assistance to ethnic minorities for maintenance of customs and traditions, but at a level that matched the high level of disagreement among those who were satisfied with their financial position (75.6%, 72.7%). Variance for sense of national pride and belonging averaged less than 5%, variance for involvement in voluntary work was 7.5% (Figures 9.9 and 9.10).

Figure 9.9: Variance: responses of financially dissatisfied compared with responses of satisfied, long-time Australian respondents

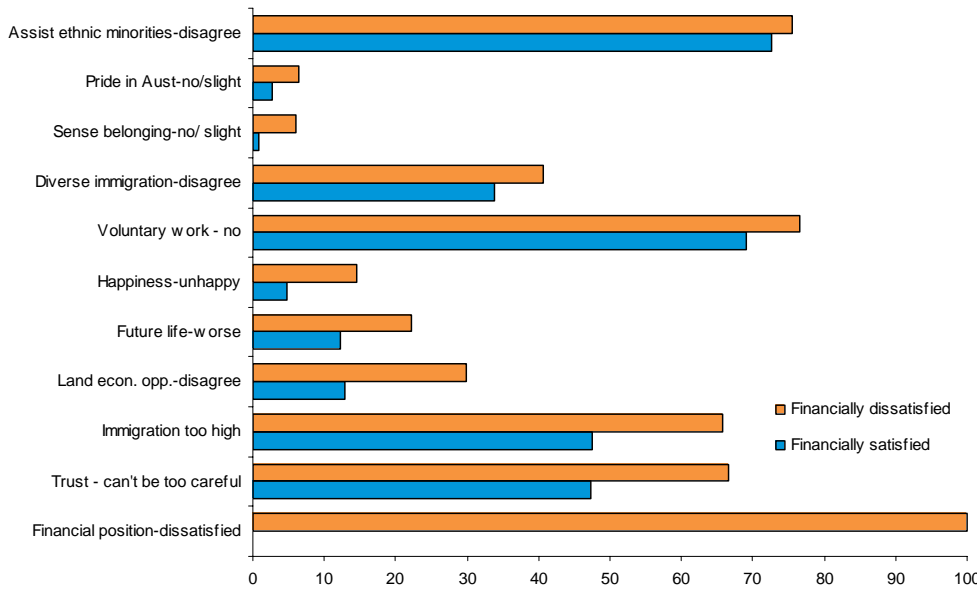
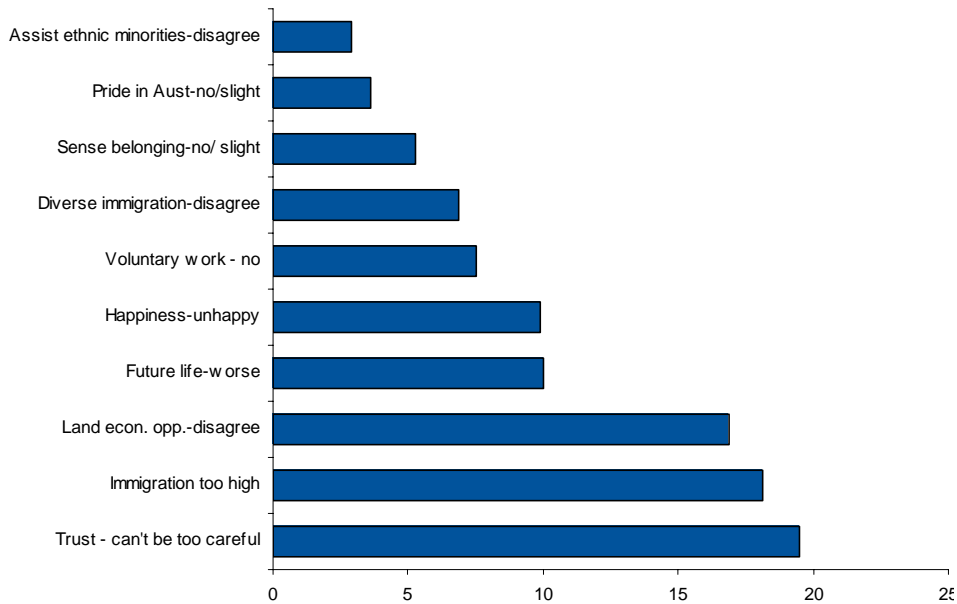


Figure 9.10: Variance (percentage): responses of financially dissatisfied compared with responses of satisfied, long-time Australian respondents



The extent of variance is at a higher level among the long-time Australians than for the Middle East background sub-group, but the magnitude of negativity is within a narrow range – at or below ten percentage points for seven of the ten indicators. There is warrant, however, to explore further the attitudes of the long-time Australians, which is undertaken through analysis of correlations with questions related to immigration and settlement policy.

In keeping with the logic of public opinion, the general nature of the question concerning the value of immigration from different countries elicits a low level of negative response. It is hypothesized that those who give a negative response to a question of this type are those most strongly opposed to existing immigration policy. Of the long-time Australians, some 35.4% (108 respondents) disagree with the proposition that immigrants from different countries make Australia stronger, 59.4% (183 respondents) agree. When those who registered disagreement were further considered, it was found that more than three out of four (76.9%) also consider that the immigration intake is too high and almost nine out of ten (86.3%) disagree with government assistance to ethnic minorities. These are markedly higher than for all long-time Australian respondents in the local surveys, and for the same grouping at the national level. (Table 9.16)

Table 9.16: Attitude to immigration and settlement issues

	National Long-time Australian	Local Long-time Australian	Local Long-time Australian Disagree that immigrants from different countries make Australia stronger
Immigrants from different countries make Australia stronger – disagree	28.3%	35.4%	(100%)
Number of immigrants – too high	38.8%	51.3%	76.9%
Government assistance to ethnic minorities to maintain customs and traditions – disagree	66.5%	73.3%	86.3%
TOTAL N	1061	307	108

To establish the extent to which attitudes are directly correlated, the responses of those who disagree with the value of a immigration from different countries were correlated with the other two other questions concerning immigration and settlement policy: this correlation establishes that 23.5% of long-time Australian respondents in the local surveys (18% in the national survey) disagree with the proposition that immigration from different countries makes Australian stronger *and* consider the current immigration intake to be too high *and* disagree with government assistance to ethnic minorities to maintain customs and traditions.

This attitudinal grouping was further narrowed by considering the strongest level of disagreement; 11.1% of long-time Australian respondents in the local surveys (double the 5.6% in the national survey) *strongly disagree* with the proposition that immigration from different countries make Australian stronger, consider the current immigration intake to be too high and *strongly disagree* with government assistance to ethnic minorities to maintain customs and traditions.

The extent to which the differing attitude towards a diverse immigration intake indicates difference of opinion on a broad range of issues was explored by comparing the responses to ten questions. For four of the questions the response of those who [a] disagree with the value of immigration from different countries and those who [b] support immigration from different countries differs by an average of more than twenty percentage points. As noted, there is markedly higher level of opposition to the current immigration intake and to government assistance to ethnic minorities for maintenance of customs and traditions; in addition, a higher proportion of those who disagree with the value of immigration from different countries are of the view that 'you can't be too careful' in dealing with people (63.5%, 42.5%), and have less optimism for the future (25.5%, 7.5%). But variation averages less than five percentage points in response to six additional questions related to satisfaction with personal finances, the view of Australia as a land of economic opportunity, level of happiness, sense of belonging, sense of pride, and participation in voluntary work. (Figure 9.11, 9.12)

Figure 9.11: Variance: respondents who disagree with the value of immigration from different countries compared with respondents who agree, long-time Australian respondents

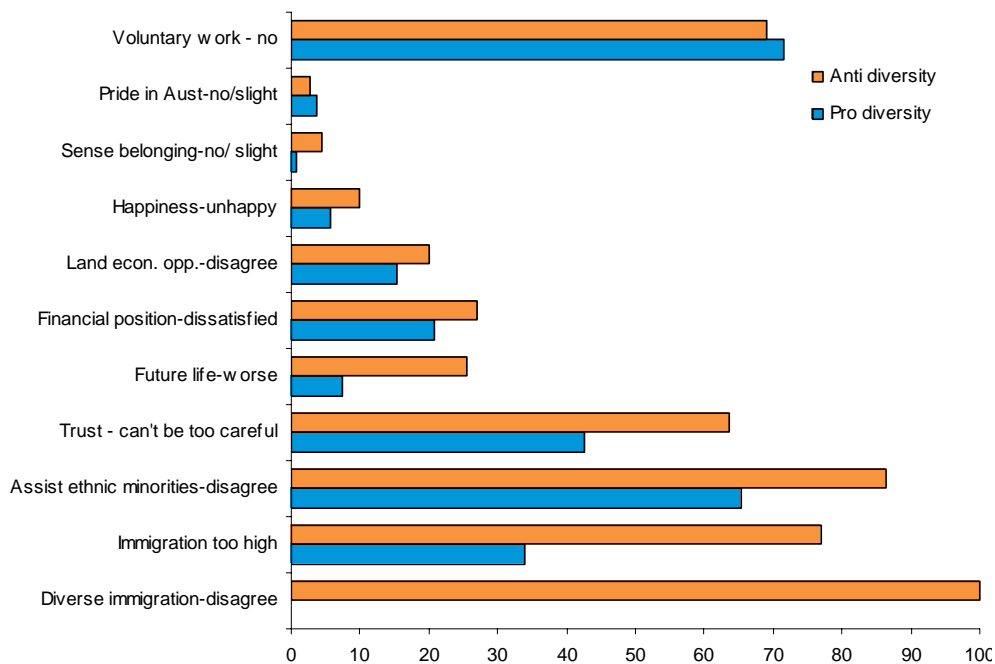
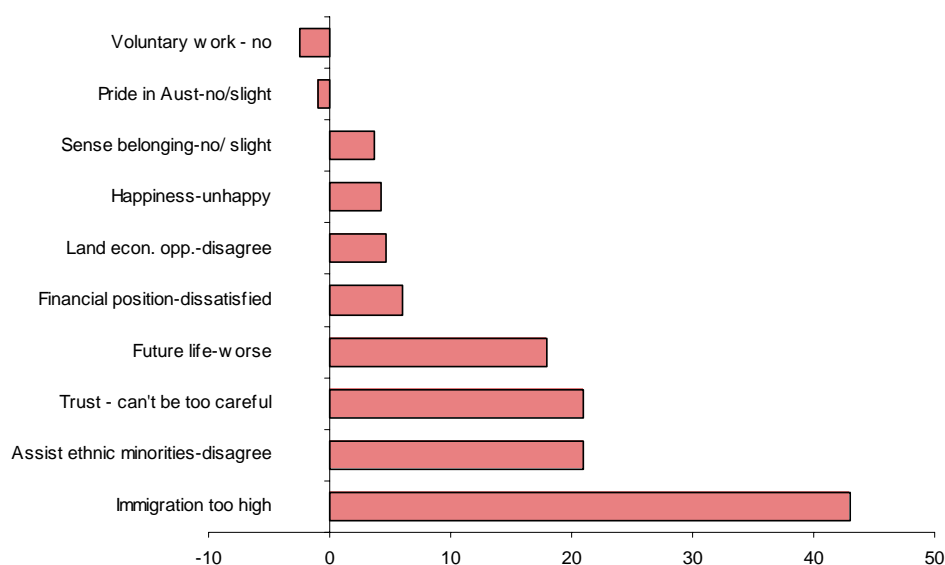


Figure 9.12 Variance (percentage): respondents who disagree with the value of immigration from different countries compared with respondents who agree, long-time Australian respondents



This is a significant finding: when considering the long-time Australians, a minority of 23.5% are shown to have correlated negative attitudes to current immigration and settlement policy. This sub-group also has lower levels of trust and its members are more pessimistic about their future prospects. But negativity does not characterise their broad outlook. A clustering of negative views in one sphere of life can lead to alienation, evidenced by lower levels of life satisfaction, lower levels of national pride and sense of belonging, and withdrawal from community life, as indicated by level of involvement in voluntary work. The local surveys conducted for this study show that this wider process is not happening among the long-time Australian respondents.

The socially engaged

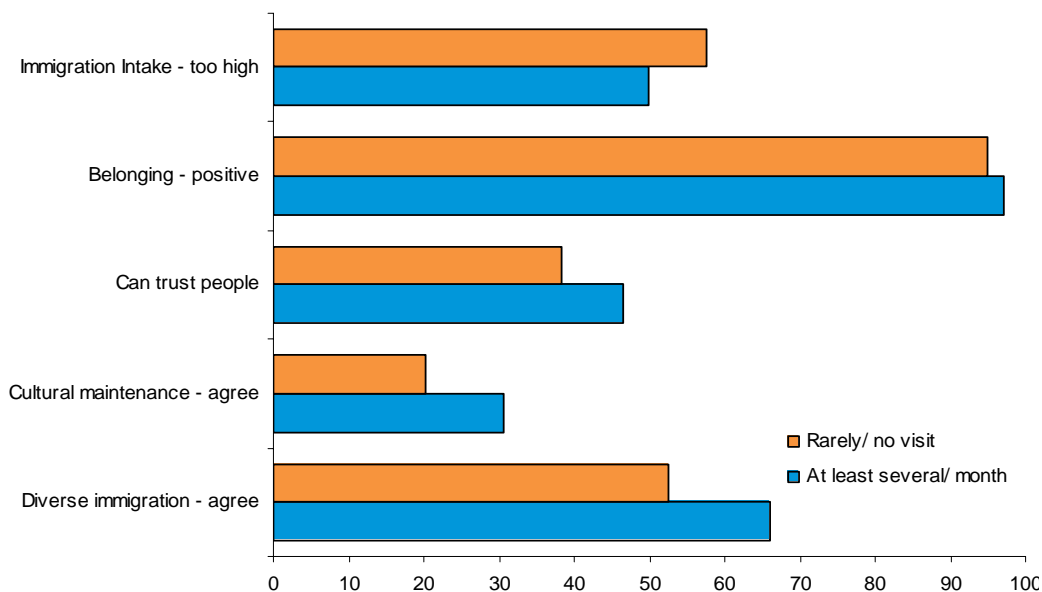
Two indicators were used to identify the socially engaged: those who report (a) engagement in voluntary work and (b) frequent mixing with people of ethnicity or nationality different from their own. For purposes of analysis a statistically significant sub-sample (n=396) is available for long-time Australian respondents.

Of the long-time Australian respondents, 26% engage in voluntary work at least once per month. When this sub-group is compared with Australia-born who do not engage in voluntary work, it is indicated that they are more likely to think that people can be trusted (53%: 43%) and are less likely to view the immigration intake as too high (44%: 55%), but when other questions related to immigration and settlement policy and sense of belonging are considered there is only minor variation.

Of the long-time Australian respondents, 45% report frequent visits (several per month) to the homes

of people of ethnicity or nationality different from their own; 26% report rarely or never visiting people of other ethnicity or nationality. When the attitudes of the two groups are compared, it is indicated that those who report frequent visits are more likely to support government assistance to ethnic minorities to maintain their customs and traditions (31%: 20%), to see more benefit in immigration from different countries (66%: 53%), to be less likely to view the immigration intake as being too high (50%: 58%), and to indicate greater level of trust in people (47%: 38%) (Figure 9.13).

Figure 9.13: Correlation of attitudes, those who often people of different ethnicity or nationality compared with those who rarely visit, long-time Australian respondents



There is thus a consistent pattern denoting a more positive outlook to fellow Australians, including the overseas-born. This analysis provides a measure of the significance of social engagement – forms of personal contact that may be seen to promote greater empathy and understanding, as well as being a product of greater levels of trust and empathy. The findings are in the expected positive direction, but the extent of attitudinal difference between the long-time Australians who engage in voluntary work and those who do not, between those who mix with people of different cultures and those who do not, may be seen as relatively small – of the order of an extra 10% of long-time Australian respondents favourable to a specific policy, rather than a major divide or change in outlook.

Chapter Ten

Conclusion

The 2007 benchmark survey researched social cohesion within five domains: belonging, social justice and equity, participation, acceptance and worth

The survey results indicate that sense of belonging, pride, identification, and levels of worth or life satisfaction remain at the high level that have characterised Australian society over recent decades. Belief in Australia as a land of economic opportunity continues. In terms of acceptance of minorities, nearly seven of 10 respondents at the national level are of the view that immigration from diverse sources makes Australia a stronger country. The national survey established that over the last decade majority support for immigration has continued, in a context of significant growth in the program.

Cohort analysis of the overseas-born shows strong levels of identification and satisfaction established in the early years of settlement, and their strengthening over time. Other research, including the Longitudinal Study of Immigrants to Australia, supports this finding.

Levels of disaffection were analysed in regions of high immigrant concentration and small minorities of the seriously disaffected, less than 5% of respondents within specific birthplace groups, were identified; using a broader indicator the disaffected may extend to 15% of respondents. This and other indicators, notably the correlated negative views on immigration and settlement issues of some 23.5% of long-time Australians, point to the potential for politicisation of the immigration program. It may prove to be the case, however, that when the 2007 survey is benchmarked against subsequent research the key finding is that the level of disaffection and threat to social cohesion is at historically low levels.

The broad indicators thus point to a society that is succeeding in establishing and maintaining a high level of positive outcomes within the domains of belonging, social justice and worth. A country in which significant minorities express negative views about their sense of belonging and self-worth, lack pride in their national institutions and do not accept that there is an equality of economic opportunity, is a country with serious problems; it is a country in which social cohesion is endangered. Australia is not such a country.

There are, however, indicators of concern within the domains of participation and acceptance: a significant level of misunderstanding between birthplace groups, heightened reporting of discriminatory and hostile behaviour, lower levels of involvement in the political process and voluntary work, lower levels of mixing between Australians of different ethnicity. These findings all point to lower levels of social capital in areas of high immigrant concentration.

Challenges for policy include the need to foster increased participation in community life within areas of high immigrant concentration and to further understanding of the immigrant experience, of the difficulties of resettlement in unfamiliar environments and alien cultures, of the personal impact of discriminatory acts and of the contribution that immigrants have made and continue to make to Australian society.

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Attachment

The national benchmark questionnaire

Monash University
Social Cohesion Research Program
BENCHMARK SURVEY

MODULE A: ECONOMIC

*(ALL)

A1 To start with, I'd like you to tell me your views on various economic and social issues. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements.

(PROBE: Is that strongly agree / disagree or agree / disagree?)

(STATEMENTS)

- a. Australia has an excellent government school system.
- b. People living on low incomes in Australia receive enough financial support from the government
- c. In Australia today, the gap between those with high incomes and those with low incomes is too large.
- d. Australia is a land of economic opportunity where in the long run, hard work brings a better life.

(RESPONSE FRAME)

- 1 Strongly agree
- 2 Agree
- 3 (Neither agree or disagree)
- 4 Disagree
- 5 Strongly disagree
- 6 (None of the above/ Don't know)
- 7 (Refused)

*(ALL)

A5. Now a question about your own financial circumstances. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your present financial situation? (PROBE: Is that very satisfied / dissatisfied or a little satisfied / dissatisfied?)

- 8 Very satisfied
- 9 Satisfied
- 10 (Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied)
- 11 Dissatisfied
- 12 Very dissatisfied
- 13 (Don't know)
- 14 (Refused)

MODULE B: POLITICAL

*(ALL)

B1. Do you currently undertake any voluntary work? (INTERVIEWER NOTE: This does NOT include unpaid work in a family business)

- 15 Yes
- 16 No (GO TO B4)
- 17 (Don't know) (GO TO B4)
- 18 (Refused) (GO TO B4)

*(UNDERTAKES VOLUNTEER WORK)

B2. What sort of voluntary work are you doing? (MULTIPLE RESPONSE)

- 1. Administration / clerical / recruitment
- 2. Befriending / supporting / listening / counselling
- 3. Sports coaching / refereeing / judging
- 4. Fundraising / sales
- 5. Management / committee work / coordination
- 6. Performing / media production
- 7. Personal care / assistance
- 8. School canteen / tuck shop
- 9. Other preparing / serving food
- 10. Repairing / maintenance / gardening
- 11. School reading
- 12. Other teaching / instruction / providing information
- 13. Transporting people / goods
- 14. Emergency services (SES, etc)
- 15. Other (specify)
- 16. (Don't know)
- 17. (Refused)

*(UNDERTAKES VOLUNTEER WORK)

B3. How often do you participate in voluntary activities? (PROBE TO CLARIFY)

- 19 At least once a week
- 20 At least once a month
- 21 Three to four times a year
- 22 At least once a year
- 23 (Don't know)
- 24 (Refused)

*(ALL)

B4. Now some questions about different forms of political action people can take. Please tell me which if any, of the following, you have done over the last three years or so. (READ OUT)
(ACCEPT MULTIPLES)

- 25 Voted in an election
- 26 Signed a petition
- 27 Written or spoken to a Federal or State Member of Parliament
- 28 Attended a political meeting
- 29 Joined a boycott of a product or company
- 30 Attended a protest, march or demonstration
- 31 Participated in strike action, or
- 32 Some other form of political action (SPECIFY _____)
- 33 (None of the above) (GO TO B6a)
- 34 (Don't know) (GO TO B6a)
- 35 (Refused) (GO TO B6a)

*(PARTICIPATES IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES)

B5a Do you participate in any political activities with a GROUP of people – for example, as a member of an interest group, a political party, a union, or something else?

- 36 Yes
- 37 No (GO TO B6a)
- 38 (Don't know) (GO TO B6a)
- 39 (Refused) (GO TO B6a)

*(PARTICIPATES IN POLITICAL ACTIVITY AS PART OF A GROUP)

B5c. How often do you participate in political activities as part of a group? Would you say ...
(READ OUT)

- 40 Several times a week
- 41 Several times a month
- 42 Once a month
- 43 Several times a year, or
- 44 Once a year, or
- 45 Even less frequently
- 46 (Don't know)
- 47 (Refused)

*(PARTICIPATES IN POLITICAL ACTIVITY AS PART OF A GROUP)

B5b. Does this group include people of a different national or ethnic background to you?

- 48 Yes
- 49 No
- 50 (Don't know)
- 51 (Refused)

*(ALL)

B6a. How often do you think the government in Canberra can be trusted to do what is right for the Australian people? Would you say ...(READ OUT)

- 52 Almost always
- 53 Most of the time
- 54 Only some of the time, or
- 55 Almost never
- 56 (Don't know)
- 57 (Refused)

*(ALL)

B6b. How often do you think the local council can be trusted to do what is right for the people in your area? Would you say ...(READ OUT)

- 58 Almost always
- 59 Most of the time
- 60 Only some of the time, or
- 61 Almost never
- 62 (Don't know)
- 63 (Refused)

*(ALL)

B7. Please tell me to what extent, if at all, you think the following actions can be justified.

(STATEMENTS)

- a Can claiming government benefits to which you are not entitled
- b Can avoiding a fare on public transport
- c Can cheating on taxes if you have a chance

(RESPONSE FRAME) (READ OUT)

- 64 Always be justified,
- 65 Often be justified
- 66 Rarely be justified, or
- 67 Never be justified
- 68 (Don't know)
- 69 (Refused)

MODULE C: SOCIO-CULTURAL

*(ALL)

C1. Now some questions about immigration. What do you think of the number of immigrants accepted into Australia at present? Would you say it is ... (READ OUT)

- 70 Too high
- 71 About right, or
- 72 Too low
- 73 (No opinion/ don't know)
- 74 (Refused)

*(ALL)

C10. Do you think the balance or mix of immigrants from different countries is about right?

- 75 Yes (GO TO C2)
- 76 No
- 77 (No opinion - I do not support immigration at all) (GO TO C2)
- 78 (No opinion – I do not think of immigration in terms of countries of origin) (GO TO C2)
- 79 (Don't know) (GO TO C2)
- 80 (Refused) (GO TO C2)

*(BALANCE IF IMMIGRANTS IS NOT RIGHT)

C11. From which countries, if any, should there be more immigrants?

1	None	27	Serbia / Montenegro
2	Australia	28	Singapore
3	Afghanistan	29	South Africa
4	Canada	30	Sri Lanka
5	China (excluding Taiwan)	31	Sudan
6	Croatia	32	United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales, Nth Ireland)
7	Egypt	33	USA
8	Fiji	34	Vietnam
9	Germany	35	Asia (PROBE FOR SPECIFIC COUNTRIES)
10	Greece	36	South America (PROBE FOR SPECIFIC COUNTRIES)
11	Hong Kong	37	North America (PROBE FOR SPECIFIC COUNTRIES)
12	Hungary	38	Middle East (PROBE FOR SPECIFIC COUNTRIES)
13	India	39	Western Europe (PROBE FOR SPECIFIC COUNTRIES)
14	Indonesia	40	Eastern Europe (PROBE FOR SPECIFIC COUNTRIES)
15	Ireland	41	Africa (PROBE FOR SPECIFIC COUNTRIES)
16	Italy	42	Other (please specify)
17	Iran	43	(Refused)
18	Iraq		
19	Lebanon		
20	Macedonia		
21	Malaysia		
22	Malta		
23	Netherlands (Holland)		
24	New Zealand		
25	Philippines		
26	Poland		

*(BALANCE IF IMMIGRANTS IS NOT RIGHT)

C12. From which countries, if any, should there be less immigrants?

43 SAME CODE FRAME AS ABOVE TO BE USED

*(ALL)

C2. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements. (PROBE: Is that strongly agree / agree or strongly disagree / disagree?)

(STATEMENTS)

- a) Accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger
- b) Ethnic minorities in Australia SHOULD be given Australian government assistance to maintain their customs and traditions
- c) Once settled in Australia, immigrants should not get involved in the politics of their former home country

(RESPONSE FRAME)

- 44 Strongly agree
- 45 Agree
- 46 (Neither agree or disagree)
- 47 Disagree
- 48 Strongly disagree
- 49 (None of the above/ Don't know)
- 50 (Refused)

*(ALL)

C5a. Apart from your immediate family, do you ever visit people of other nationalities or ethnic backgrounds? (IF YES: INTERVIEWER PROBE: Would that be...) (READ OUT)

- 51 Several times a week
- 52 Several times a month
- 53 Once a month
- 54 Several times a year, or
- 55 Less often
- 56 (No / Not at all)
- 57 (Don't know)
- 58 (Refused)

*(ALL)

C5b. (Apart from your immediate family,) do you ever have people of other nationalities or ethnic backgrounds visit you? (IF YES: INTERVIEWER PROBE: Would that be...) (READ OUT)

- 1. Several times a week
- 2. Several times a month
- 3. Once a month
- 4. Several times a year, or
- 5. Less often
- 6. (No / Not at all)
- 7. (Don't know)
- 8. (Refused)

*(ALL)

C5c. (Apart from your immediate family,) do you ever visit people of a different faith or religion? (IF YES: INTERVIEWER PROBE: Would that be...) (READ OUT)

- 1. Several times a week
- 2. Several times a month
- 3. Once a month
- 4. Several times a year, or

1. Less often
2. (No / Not at all)
3. (Don't know)
4. (Refused)

*(ALL)

C5d. (Apart from your immediate family,) do you ever have people of a different faith or religion visit you? (IF YES: INTERVIEWER PROBE: Would that be...) (READ OUT)

1. Several times a week
2. Several times a month
3. Once a month
4. Several times a year, or
5. Less often
6. (No / Not at all)
7. (Don't know)
8. (Refused)

*(ALL)

C7. To what extent do you take pride in the Australian way of life and culture? Would you say ... (READ OUT)

- 1 To a great extent
- 2 To a moderate extent
- 3 Only slightly, or
- 4 Not at all
- 5 (Don't know)
- 6 (Refused)

*(ALL)

C8. And to what extent do you have a sense of belonging in Australia? Would you say ... (READ OUT)

- 7 To a great extent
- 8 To a moderate extent
- 9 Only slightly, or
- 10 Not at all
- 11 (Don't know)
- 12 (Refused)

*(ALL)

C9. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement. In the modern world, maintaining the Australian way of life and culture is important. (PROBE: Is that strongly agree / disagree or agree / disagree?)

- 1 Strongly agree
- 2 Agree
- 3 (Neither agree nor disagree)
- 4 Disagree
- 5 Strongly disagree
- 6 (Don't know)
- 7 (Refused)

MODULE D: DISCRIMINATION

*(ALL)

D1. Have you ever experienced discrimination in Australia because of your national or ethnic background or your religion? (PROBE TO CLARIFY) (ALLOW CODES 1 AND 2 TO BE MULTI CODED)

- 8 Yes – National or ethnic background
- 9 Yes – Religion
- 10 No (GO TO E1)
- 11 (Don't know) (GO TO E1)
- 12 (Refused) (GO TO E1)

*(HAS EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION)

D2. Please tell me which of the following best describes how often this discrimination occurs. Would you say ...(READ OUT)

- 13 Once or twice a week
- 14 Once or twice a month
- 15 Once or twice a year
- 16 Once or twice in five years, or
- 17 Once or twice in my life
- 18 (Don't know)
- 19 (Refused)

*(HAS EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION)

D3. Where did the discrimination occur? Please tell me if any of these apply. Was it ...(ACCEPT MULTIPLES) (READ OUT)

- 20 When being served in a shop
- 21 When being served in a government office
- 22 When seeking employment, or at work
- 23 When seeking to rent or buy an apartment or house
- 24 At school
- 25 On the street, or
- 26 Somewhere else (SPECIFY _____)
- 27 (Don't know)
- 28 (Refused)

*(HAS EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION)

D4 What form did the discrimination take? Please tell me if any of these apply. (ACCEPT MULTIPLES) (READ OUT)

- 29 Were you made to feel that you did not belong
- 30 Were you verbally abused
- 31 Were you not offered a job
- 32 Were you not promoted or fairly treated at work
- 33 Was your property damaged
- 34 Were you physically attacked, or
- 35 Something else (SPECIFY _____)
- 36 (Don't know)
- 37 (Refused)

*(HAS EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION)

D5 Have you experienced discrimination because of your national, ethnic or religious background in the last twelve months?

- 38 Yes
- 39 No
- 40 (Refused)

MODULE E: REFLECTIVE

*(ALL)

E1. Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people. (PROBE: Is that can be trusted / can't be too careful?)

- 41 Can be trusted
- 42 Can't be too careful
- 43 Can't choose
- 44 (Refused)

*(ALL)

E2. Taking ALL things into consideration, would you say that over the last year YOU have been ... (READ OUT)

- 45 Very happy
- 46 Happy
- 47 (Neither happy nor unhappy)
- 48 Unhappy, or
- 49 Very unhappy
- 50 (Don't know)
- 51 (Refused)

*(ALL)

E3. In three or four years, do you think that your life in Australia will be... (READ OUT)

- 52 Much improved
- 53 A little improved
- 54 The same as now
- 55 A little worse, or
- 56 Much worse
- 57 (Don't think will be living in Australia) (GO TO DEM 1)
- 58 (Cannot predict / Don't know)
- 59 (Refused)

*(ALL)

E4. Compared with your life, do you think that the lives of today's children will be ... (READ OUT)

- 60 Much better (GO TO DEM1a)
- 61 A little better (GO TO DEM1a)
- 62 The same as now (GO TO DEM1a)
- 63 A little worse, or
- 64 Much worse
- 65 (Cannot predict / Don't know) (GO TO DEM1a)
- 66 (Refused) (GO TO DEM1a)

*(LIVES OF NEXT GENERATION WILL BE WORSE)

E5. Why do you say that? (DO NOT PROMPT, DO NOT READ OUT)

- 67 Response given (please specify)
- 68 (Don't know)
- 69 (Refused)

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

*(ALL)

DEM1a We're nearly finished now. Just a final few questions to make sure we've spoken to a good range of people.

How old were you last birthday?

70 Age given (RECORD AGE IN YEARS (RANGE 18 TO 99) (GO TO DEM2)

71 (Refused)

*(REFUSED AGE)

DEM1b Could you please tell me which of the following age groups are you in? (READ OUT)

72 18 - 24 years

73 25 - 34 years

74 35 - 44 years

75 45 – 54 years

76 55 – 64 years

77 65 – 74 years, or

78 75 + years

79 (Refused)

*(ALL)

DEM2. Record Gender

80 Male

81 Female

*(ALL)

DEM3. Which of the following best describes your current marital status? Are you...(READ OUT)

82 Married

83 Living with a partner

84 Widowed

85 Divorced

86 Separated, or

87 Never married

88 (Don't know)

89 (Refused)

*(ALL)

DEM4. How many children, if any, do you have?

90 Record number (SPECIFY: ALLOWABLE RANGE 1 – 10)

91 No children (GO TO DEM6)

92 Refused (GO TO DEM6)

*(HAVE CHILDREN)

DEM5. Do you have any children that live overseas? (PROBE TO CLARIFY)

93 Yes - Record number (SPECIFY: ALLOWABLE RANGE 1 – NUMBER PROVIDED IN DEM 4)

94 No

95 (Refused)

*(ALL)

DEM6. Are you an Australian citizen?

96 Yes

97 No

98 (Don't know)

99 (Refused)

*(ALL)

DEM7. What is your first language?

100 English (GO TO DEM9)

101 Arabic

102 Australian Indigenous Languages

103 Cantonese

104 Mandarin

105 Croatian

106 Greek

107 Hindi

108 Italian

109 Macedonian

110 Spanish

111 Turkish

112 Vietnamese

113 Other (Specify)

114 (Don't know) (GO TO DEM9)

115 (Refused) (GO TO DEM9)

*(ENGLISH IS A SECOND LANGUAGE)

DEM8. Please bear with me, we ask this question of everyone, how well do you SPEAK English?

Would you say.....

116 Very well

117 Well

118 Not well, or

119 Not at all

120 (Can't say)

121 (Refused)

*(ALL)

DEM10 What is the highest level of education you have completed?

122 Primary school

123 Year 7 to Year 9

124 Year 10

125 Year 11

126 Year 12

127 Trade/apprenticeship

128 Other TAFE/Technical Certificate

129 Diploma

130 Bachelor Degree

131 Post-Graduate Degree

132 Other (please specify)

133 (Refused)

*(ALL)

DEM11 Which one of these BEST describes your employment situation? Are you ... (READ OUT)

134 Employed

135 Unemployed

136 Retired

137 Student

138 Home duties, or

139 Something else (specify)

140 (Don't know)

141 (Refused)

PREDEM12 IF DEM10=CODES 6-10 (POST SECONDARY SCHOOL QUALIFICATIONS)
CONTINUE. OTHERS GO TO PREDEM13

*(POST SECONDARY SCHOOL QUALIFICATIONS)

DEM12 What area are your qualifications in?

*NOTE: This would be coded to ASCED (Australian Standard Classification of Education)

142 Response given (SPECIFY ____)

143 (Don't know)

144 (Refused)

PREDEM13 IF DEM11=CODE 1 (EMPLOYED) CONTINUE. OTHERS GO TO PREDEM13a

*(EMPLOYED)

DEM13 What is your current occupation? (PROBE: Main duties and job title)

145 Managers

146 Professionals

147 Technicians and trades workers

148 Community and personal service workers

149 Clerical and administrative workers

150 Sales workers

151 Machinery operators and drivers

152 Labourers

153 Other (specify) (Probe for job title and main duties)

154 (Don't know)

155 (Refused)

*(POST SECONDARY SCHOOL QUALIFICATIONS AND EMPLOYED)

DEM13a To what extent, if at all, do you use the skills and knowledge gained from your
qualifications in your current job? Would you say ... (READ OUT)

156 To a great extent

157 To a moderate extent

158 Only slightly, or

159 Not at all

160 (Don't know)

161 (Refused)

*(ALL)

DEM14 What is your CURRENT PERSONAL income, after tax and other deductions, from all sources? (PROBE TO CLARIFY)

162 No income

163 \$1 to less than \$15,000 per year (\$1-\$287 per week)

164 \$15,000 to less than \$30,000 per year (\$288-\$577 per week)

165 \$30,000 to less than \$40,000 per year (\$578-\$769 per week)

166 \$40,000 to less than \$50,000 per year (\$770-\$962 per week)

167 \$50,000 to less than \$75,000 per year (\$963-\$1442 per week)

168 \$75,000 to less than \$110,000 per year (\$1,443-\$2,115 per week)

169 \$110,000 or more per year (\$2,115 per week)

170 (Don't know)

171 (Refused)

*(ALL)

DEM 15 Are you renting, paying off a mortgage, do you own your home outright or do you have some other arrangement? (PROBE TO CLARIFY)

172 Renting from a private owner or real estate agent

173 Renting from housing commission / public housing property / community housing property

174 Being bought (i.e. have a mortgage)

175 Owned

176 Paying board

177 Living rent free

178 Something else (specify)

179 (Refused)

*(ALL)

DEM15 In which countries were you and your family members born?

(STATEMENTS)

a) Starting with yourself

b) Your spouse? (ONLY ASK IF DEM 3=CODE 1 OR 2 (MARRIED OR LIVING WITH PARTNER)

c) Your mother?

d) And finally, in which country was your father born?

(RESPONSE FRAME)

- 180 Australia
- 181 Canada
- 182 China (excluding Taiwan)
- 183 Croatia
- 184 Egypt
- 185 Fiji
- 186 Germany
- 187 Greece
- 188 Hong Kong
- 189 Hungary
- 190 India
- 191 Indonesia
- 192 Ireland
- 193 Italy
- 194 Lebanon
- 195 Macedonia
- 196 Malaysia
- 197 Malta
- 198 Netherlands (Holland)
- 199 New Zealand
- 200 Philippines
- 201 Poland
- 202 Serbia / Montenegro
- 203 Singapore
- 204 South Africa
- 205 Sri Lanka
- 206 Sudan
- 207 United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales, Nth Ireland)
- 208 USA
- 209 Vietnam
- 210 Other (please specify)
- 211 (Not applicable) (ONLY DISPLAY FOR STATEMENTS C AND D)
- 212 (Don't know) (ONLY DISPLAY FOR STATEMENTS B, C AND D)
- 213 (Refused)

PREDEM16 IF DEM15A=CODE 1 OR 34 (AUSTRALIA OR REFUSED) GO TO DEM17.
OTHERS CONTINUE.

*(NOT BORN IN AUSTRALIA)

DEM16 In what year did you arrive in Australia?

214 Response given (SPECIFY ___) (ALLOWABLE RANGE 2007 LESS AGE OF
RESPONDENT-2007)

215 (Don't know)

216 (Refused)

*(ALL)

DEM17 Do you follow any religion or faith?

217 Catholic

218 Anglican (Church of England)

219 Uniting Church

220 Presbyterian

221 Greek Orthodox

222 Baptist

223 Lutheran

224 Islam

225 Buddhist

226 Judaism

227 Hinduism

228 Christian (no further information)

229 No religion

230 Other (SPECIFY)

231 (Don't know)

232 (Refused)

*(ALL)

DEM18 And finally, what is the postcode of the area in which you live?

233 Response given (SPECIFY___) (Allowable range: 800 - 9729)

234 (Don't know)

235 (Refused)

Glossary

ESB – person of English-speaking background

First generation (immigrant) – Australian who was born overseas

LGA – Local Government Area

Long-time Australian – a term used in the SBS *Living Diversity* report, defined in this report as those respondents who are born in Australia to Australian-born parents. This does not necessarily mean that they are of Anglo-Celtic background. The term is only used with reference to the local surveys in this report.

NESB – person of non-English-speaking background

SLA – Statistical Local Area

World Values Survey – the most comprehensive international investigation of political and social attitudes, involving (to the present) four waves of surveys, the first conducted in the years 1981-1984.



